Daily Report

Latin America

FBIS-LAT-92-041
Monday
2 March 1992

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FBIS-LAT-92-041 *2 March 1992*

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Venezuela

Caracas TV broadcasts comments by President Perez calling the situation in the country "completely normal" following the 4 February coup attempt. He also promises that constitutional rights will be restored in March. In a speech to the nation carried by Caracas TV, President Perez says he will not resign his post, but will carry out his constitutional duty as president through 24 February 1994.

According to AFP, President Perez has also agreed to convene a constitutional assembly, as urged by the COPEI party leader. The assembly would seek a solution to the present government crisis by attempting to reform the Constitution.

Haiti

AFP carries a report that General Raoul Cedras has proclaimed the Armed Forces' "neutrality" regarding the agreement signed between deposed President Jean-Bertrand Aristide and a delegation of Haitian parliamentarians. According to the report, Cedras privately told Prime Minister-Designate Rene Theodore that he supported the agreement. However, Cedras sent a letter to Theodore stating that "the Haitian Armed Forces will not be manipulated to tip the balance in anyone's favor."

Honduras

EL HERALDO publishes the text of an official communique sent to El Salvador in response to alleged Honduran Air Forces flights over Salvadoran territory. In the 27 February note, Foreign Affairs Minister Jaime Guell Bogran refers to the allegations as "totally groundless charges."

Panama

Government and Justice Minister Juan Chevalier, discussing the bombing on Via Argentina in Panama City on 27 February, said the bombing near ACAN-EFE was "for propaganda purposes," Panama City TV reported.

Cuba

Havana Radio carries a speech by President Fidel Castro at a ceremony celebrating the 30th anniversary of the Cuban Academy of Sciences. Castro congratulates medical and agricultural researchers on their recent advances. He calls for "a campaign to promote science in the Third World."

Colombia

Santa Fe de Bogota radio reports that Mexico has agreed to host the next round of negotiations between the Colombian Government and the Simon Bolivar National Guerrilla Coordinating Board. According to a Mexico City NOTIMEX report, a presidential spokesman said negotiations are scheduled to resume on 5 March. However, Santa Fe de Bogota TV reports that Horacio Serpa Uribe, presidential adviser for peace, has denied that negotiations will resume on 5 March. Serpa Uribe did verify, however, that the next round of talks would be held in Mexico.

Cuba

Castro Speaks to Academy of Sciences

FL2402200092 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 2100 GMT 21 Feb 92

[Speech by President Fidel Castro at ceremony marking the 30th anniversary of the Cuban Academy of Sciences at the Havana Convention Center on 20 February—recorded]

[Text] Distinguished guests, comrades:

Really, I have nothing to say or to add to the brilliant and clear report Comrade Rosa Elena [Simeon, president of the Academy of Sciences] has given. She wanted me to speak. She was insistent, but I said: You have to speak. Now, she has said in her speech that some time after lunch they had told her that I was not going to speak—that I was on strike. [laughter] Really, she has done very well. I have been trying to see if she has forgotten anything, but she has not.

At the beginning, I saw that she was talking about the Academy of Sciences a lot. I thought Rosa Elena was going to forget the effort that all the other scientific research centers have made. Had she forgotten that the Academy of Sciences is related to all the scientific research centers? But, of course, we are commemorating the 30th anniversary of the Academy of Sciences, and she had to speak, above all, on everything that had been done in those 30 years and on the work done by the scientific research centers of the Academy of Sciences.

Of course, I am not saying that, at a given time, the Academy of Sciences transferred a number of centers, which passed to different state organizations. It was thought appropriate to distribute some agricultural centers to the Agriculture Ministry, or those of the sugar industry to the Sugar Ministry. Also, other organizations, like public health, already had their own research centers. She gave the figure of 179 centers, or 100 what? It does not matter; next month there will be a few more. [laughter] There are 173. Those centers have (?been set up) and are working. We do not want the Academy of Sciences to neglect these centers for one minute. The Academy of Sciences is the guiding organization. It does not have to administer them all. It administers a number of research centers and service centers also. But it has to direct all the centers in general. I think the Academy of Sciences is an integrating factor for the sciences.

We have three integrating factors, or two besides the Academy of Sciences. There is the Spare Parts, Equipment, and Advanced Technology Movement. We had to add those things to the name, because it began by being a spare parts movement, a forum. It has solved many problems, gathering together many workers, many technicians. This Spare Parts Movement also had two parts. One was for young people, because we had the Youth Technical Brigades. There are many young technicians who are employed in different factories or industries. A few hundred thousand were organized for discoveries, research, and innovations. Another part is what we call the Association of Inventors, Efficiency Experts, and Innovators. These are technicians who are older than 30.

These two parts worked within this movement, but the Spare Parts Movement and forum did not include the scientific research centers. This forum or movement has an annual event now. At the beginning, it was held every two years. Now it is annual. At the end of the year, we have a meeting of the whole movement, but it now includes the scientific research centers. The scientific research centers participated in the last forum—because I can say that in Cuba it is not only the scientists who do research. We would be in a bad way if only scientists did research. It is true that we have now, in the scientific research centers themselves, tens of thousands of science workers. I have already said that we have about 10,000 researchers, but we also have all the middle-level technicians, the workers who cooperate in one way or another.

You saw here that some of those who received medals were from the Department of Workshops of the Academy of Sciences, workers who cooperate with the scientists, and without whom the scientists would not have the materials needed to carry out their research. But the point is that, in Cuba, we have not only almost 10,000 scientists. We have the university professors. We can say that all the universities are doing research, all of them. We can say, for example, that all the medical schools are working on a program to develop monoclonal antibodies, led by a Center for Monoclonal Antibodies that is now building a new facility for research and production of monoclonal antibodies. It should be finished this year. It is difficult to build a center of this type because it has many technical requirements.

The medical schools, of which there are 21, have promoted the production of monoclonal antibodies. This shows what can be done with the universities, professors, and doctors. We have many medical research centers. We are doing research in practically all the hospitals. There is no reason for limiting scientific research to the Angiology or Cardiology or Oncology Institutes. We have 12 or 13 institutes of this kind, but we have many good hospitals and excellent groups of doctors, with their laboratories and equipment. We are promoting research in all the hospitals. Research can be done even at the polyclinics.

I am speaking, in this case, primarily for the guests from other countries. Our fellow countrymen know these things in general. But we think that even a polyclinic can do research, in its own work, its own services. You do not know the research.... [rephrases] Even family doctors do research. If they are at a factory, they can study what illnesses occur most, what the health problems are, how many people have hypertension, for example, or how

many have respiratory or circulatory problems. Sometimes we discover high cholesterol levels in groups of relatively young workers. We discover high blood pressure also.

Naturally, this has to concern us. This had existed before, but we did not know it. Family doctors did this research and made these discoveries. The family doctors also study any kind of historical or genetic factors in a community that are having an effect on the number or type of illnesses, because illnesses do not occur at the same rates. Even the cases of mental retardation or retardation in psychological development have been studied by the educational research institutions. They have conducted a number of studies on all of these issues that are very interesting.

I think there is an immense scope for research, for using intelligence and creative work. I have mentioned the polyclinics. There are so many areas; for example, the need for physiotherapy. The family doctors and polyclinics have discovered this. We had not even imagined the tremendous need there was in this field and the number of people who have orthopedic, muscular, or other types of problems. They need physiotherapy. So in each of the polyclinics in Havana, for example, we are developing physiotherapy services because one day we discovered that hundreds of thousands of people needed these services. One day they need heat treatment, another day electricity, another day massage, another day exercises that they had to be taught to do. Well, I would say that almost half the population needed these services. They did not exist at the polyclinics.

These facts and their solutions were discovered by the polyclinics themselves. So medical research can be done at the level of the polyclinics and, I repeat, at the level of the family doctors. The family doctors can be researchers by observing everything that is happening around them, under, of course, the guidance of the polyclinic management, the guidance of the overall organizations. We do not know what may be there to be discovered.

But research can be done not only at the hospitals but also at the factories. No one knows what can be done in the nickel industry in the field of research. The industry has its research institutes, but there are no institutes in the factories. Experiments can be conducted, innovations and rationalizations can be made, things can be discovered because there are dozens of high-level technicians and dozens of university professionals in every factory. In agriculture, each agricultural enterprise should do research, starting with the agronomists who are there. We are always advising them to do research at each enterprise.

Of course, many of the agricultural researchers were at the research centers before. Now they are in the field. In recent times, a movement to send researchers to the agricultural production enterprises has begun. There are different kinds of soil. Even the same variety of crop does not grow the same in different soils. In each region of the country, the same variety grows differently, because there is a different microclimate in each region of the country. For example, rice production, which is apparently so simple, but our geographic position.... [rephrases] We are between two parallels—I do not remember now what they are—the 24th. What are they? Parallel 24 and what? Havana is 23, and the Turquino Peak is what? It must be less. It is not 19. We go down so far; we are between 4 degrees. Anyone would say that our climate conditions are the same. But if you plant rice in Pinar del Rio, the western region of the country, in July, you will harvest one third of the rice you could have harvested if you had planted it in January, February, or March.

But in Granma Province, in the eastern region of the country, you will get a good rice yield if you plant in August. So on our own little island, the growth of that crop is different in the eastern region than in the western region. One is amazed by these phenomena. But in addition, within a region, growth is different in different soils. If the soil is sandy, much more water is needed, and different types of problems exist. If the soil is black clay, there is one type of growth. If the soil is red clay, growth is different.

This is for rice. But it is the same for sugarcane. We are working with sugarcane using dozens of varieties. Rosa Elena said that we produced 26 percent because, of course, we have varieties that are not Cuban only. We have varieties from many continents, many countries in the world. We have brought them here; we have tested them. We use them as genetic material to develop new cane varieties. That is why we have dozens of varieties, and we are looking for more. Now, through tissue culture and based on the possibility of producing a plant from one cell of cane, we can accelerate the process of looking for new varieties, and not only the process of looking for new varieties, but also the process of accelerating the introduction of these varieties.

So, if normally we need 10 years, we can do it in two because we can begin to produce many plants of one variety in the laboratory. With the traditional method, we had to plant it and wait one year or 10 months before we could take some little pieces of cane. Now we can get thousands of plants from one cane. If we have a very promising variety, we can multiply it quickly. I am giving examples.

Another example is the cultivation of micro-plants with bananas. When there is an exceptional plant that, under conditions equal to those for the other plants, produces a bunch weighing 80 or 85 kg, we select it immediately and multiply from it. By natural methods, we could get five plants, five offshoots from that plant. With tissue culture methods, we can get 30,000. So you can plant 13 hectares with the aerial or surface microjet system, we could say that from one plant we can plant 13 to 14 hectares. This is so you will see how many possibilities are arising.

But the idea I was talking about is that each variety, soil, region, and microclimate determine different growth in agriculture. There is our own, famous tobacco, from which those cigars have been made for a long time, and [name indistinct] always appeared in his photos with one of those big cigars. People have tried to produce those famous cigars in many places, in Central America, Santo Domingo, other places. After the embargo against Cuba began, they tried to produce that good tobacco in other places. They did not succeed, because it is a problem of the microclimate.

Do not think that Cuban tobacco is planted anywhere in Cuba. It is like wine. You have probably heard about quality wines that come from a certain valley, a certain vineyard, a certain variety. They say that even wines are different each year. No two harvests are the same because no two years have the same number of sunny days, the same amount of rain, or the same level of relative humidity in the air. All these factors influence the harvest. Our high-quality tobacco depends on small plots of land in certain valleys.

I am saying all this simply to demonstrate that if you have an agricultural enterprise with 5,000 or 10,000 hectares, and you have 20 agronomists there, those 20 agronomists have to be doing research based on the scientific and research center literature. We have some very good agricultural research centers. The research must be done, not only by our institute for—what is it called [words indistinct] INIFAT. But what does that mean? Institute for Basic Research in Tropical Agriculture. But it is not there. What have they done? They have gone to the enterprises, and at each enterprise they have demonstration areas. They are introducing their new varieties and their new techniques. We must take science to the fields, not only what they and their researchers generate, but also the practical tests that all the agronomists at the enterprises can be doing in cooperation with them.

I can tell you that the possibilities are enormous. They are now planting cress hydroponically. Cress has traditionally been planted here in water tanks near the ocean. They use an incredible amount of water. They also use fuel, as you can imagine. You have to have a river running through each tank. They are promoting hydroponic planting, or the planting of cress with microjet irrigation. No one knows the amount of water this could save. They are producing enormous amounts. They cut the cress every 25 days. They can get 10 to 12 cuttings per year. They can get 25 to 30 tons from one cut. They can get tremendous amounts of cress with microjet irrigation. This is a new technique.

We have to find a specific soil. Perhaps it will not be sufficient to provide cress for the entire city. We have to find other areas, other techniques, where we can produce it.

What I have said about agriculture can be applied to industry. What I said about the hospitals can be applied to industry. There is no reason it could not apply to industries, since we have tens of thousands of university professionals, and if the universities can do research, why not the factories? This is what we are doing, and not only with the university-graduate technicians. There are many middle-level technicians who can contribute innovations and discoveries in research. There are many outstanding workers or middle-level technicians who are not university graduates. We know many of them who have made important contributions to research.

In fact, what we are doing now is to extend research to the entire country, set everyone to doing research, experimenting, rationalizing, innovating. It is a real revolution in the concepts of scientific research. There are hundreds of thousands of people participating in this, hundreds of thousands. A small factory often appears at that forum with a large discovery, much larger than the factory, to conserve fuel or to solve problems. Now that we are in a fuel crisis, a serious crisis, everything that has to do with fuel conservation has enormous importance. The fuel emulsifiers are very important. Certain mechanical changes to the equipment and the use of alternative sources of energy are also important.

I think you know, for example, that we produce the equivalent of 4 million tons of fuel in cane bagasse. A large part is used by the sugar mills themselves, because that is an energy source for the mills. A mill can operate with 70 percent, or even less, of the bagasse it has. The rest can be used as raw material or fuel for different industries. Tremendous efforts are being made with the use of magnetizers, for example, in fuel conservation, or to prevent obstructions in the microjet valves or boiler pipes, conserving fuel and gas with materials, and many things. The use of magnetizers is becoming very important, the use of magnetizers in agriculture, what effect water that has been magnetized has on the growth of certain plants. Many of these things have been done empirically. The tests are being done, not only at the research centers but at the base level—at the research centers.

Of course, now, as it says there, the preservation of this country's independence today depends primarily on science and technology. That is a great truth. Perhaps the most important resource this country has is not the great deposits of nickel. We have nickel and cobalt, mixed with iron, chromium, and aluminum. Well, there are the resources of our climate, the natural resources for recreation and relaxation along hundreds of kilometers of our coasts, with wonderful beaches. But the most important resource this country has is the investment it has made in the minds of the people. That is the most important resource our country has.

That is why we do not say in vain that today the solutions to the country's problems basically rest, at this very difficult time, on the people's minds, on the investment that the revolution has made in the people's minds. We are really giving this a great boost. In recent times,

the sciences have been gaining great momentum in our country. This is work for hundreds of thousands of people.

I think that this is.... [rephrases] If I stress anything on a day like today, it is this. We recently had a meeting with the Food and Agriculture Organization representatives in our country. I think they were dedicating a new office. I had the opportunity to speak there at length about what we are doing in agriculture, applying science to agriculture in the food program, since we now have to see how we will produce more food—more meat, milk, protein, food in general—with much less fuel, which at times affects our irrigation systems, and without fertilizers or animal feed. This is a difficult task. It is a great challenge.

That is why for us, the bacteria that was mentioned here—the azotobacter—is extremely important. As you know, leguminous plants have their own bacteria, which also has to respond to the soil to fix nitrogen from the air through the rhizobium. But the graminaceous plants do not usually have bacteria associated with their roots to fix nitrogen from the air. However, there are bacteria in the soil that fix nitrogen from the air. Our scientists in the field of agriculture are on a real search for azotobacters, because each crop needs its own specific type and each soil may need its own specific type. We already have the facilities, because these are fermenting processes, and we have many facilities with large equipment for fermentation, primarily the torula factory.

Almost all these biological processes require fermentation, and we have a tremendous fermentation capacity to produce all the azotobacter of each of the varieties needed for each of the crops needed. Do not think that this is something old. It was only a few months ago that we talked about azotobacter for the first time, during a visit I made to INIFAT, the Institute for Basic Research in Tropical Agriculture. A scientist there told me: Well, we are working on that bacteria, and we propose to produce 100,000 liters this year. I said: What do you mean, 100,000 liters? How many do we need? In less than 72 hours, we had made the necessary arrangements to produce 1 million liters of azotobacter.

So all the vegetables here in Havana Province and other places have been grown with azotobacter. Of course, it is better if you can give them a little nitrogen because the azotobacter is not going to produce all the nitrogen, but the azotobacter saves at least 30 percent of the nitrogen. Not only does it save nitrogen, it also acts to stimulate the plant. In a research project, it has been possible to see the difference in growth of each plant. This may be with a tuberous plant like malanga, or a tomato plant, or any other vegetable. You can see the enormous difference in growth between those to which azotobacter was applied and those to which it was not applied. The growth is different depending on different applications of azotobacter, up to the point where it makes no difference if you add more azotobacter. This is something notable.

Now they are studying (azoestirilo), another bacteria, a different kind—not a variety of bacteria but a different bacteria. We are going to see if by adding bacteria and varieties of bacteria—we must discover them in the soil and multiply them, and as I have said, we are able to do this—we can reduce the amount of synthetic nitrogen that must be applied. But if you use a leguminous plant, the rhizobium can produce almost all the nitrogen the plant needs, and not only that, but it leaves the soil enriched with nitrogen.

We must find natural ways of enriching the soil. We can rotate sugarcane with soybeans, certain amounts of cane, for example, the cane we would plant in May and June. Those are not good months for planting cane. There is a lot of rain. But the soybeans can be planted in April and May, when you grind the cane, with the appropriate applications of rhizobium, because we do not have to depend only on what is in the soil. If you apply the rhizobium, apply the rhizobium cultures to the seeds, those seeds fix much more nitrogen. You harvest the soybeans and immediately plant the sugarcane, almost without having to turn the soil again, possibly just plowing the furrows.

We have begun a certain amount of this study this year, but to study the situation, next year we will plant tens of thousands of hectares, rotating sugarcane with soybeans, and then plant cane in the second half of the year. That is a much better time to plant, with much higher yields per hectare than for cane planted in May and June. The quality of the crop is not good and cannot be good during the heavy rains.

That is what this means.... [changes thought] And here I have given a medal to the center that worked on the azotobacter, and I gave another to those who worked on the (microrriza). This is a fungus, but what are its virtues? It multiplies the plant's roots. It multiplies them to the point where, if you have a cubic meter of land and you apply this microorganism, you can extract 10 to 15 times more nutrients from the soil than if you did not apply it, because this microorganism grows on the roots of some plants. We are studying it for sugarcane and many other things. It multiplies the roots to create a tangle of roots that take up the entire volume of the soil where the plant is. If there is a trace of phosphorus, it can get it. So in a difficult situation, the use of microorganisms like this is a very great help to retrieve the nutrients that are in the soil. Sometimes the level of certain nutrients is low, but it is sufficient if the roots can retrieve them. This revolutionizes all the agricultural concepts.

Rosa Elena also mentioned the use of bacteria to reduce the density of oil and to get much higher extraction of oil from the same well. Biotechnology has fabulous potential, and this is also recent. It was only a few years ago that we opened the Center for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology. We had opened a smaller center previously to produce interferon. It was less than five months between the time the news reached this country that

interferon existed and could be beneficial to treat cancer or certain types of cancer and the time when we were producing it in Cuba. When we want to work quickly, we can accelerate the processes for producing medicines because they are very important.

This interest in finding medicines in the fight against cancer has boosted science in our country. Because many lives could depend on those results, we established the principle of the dedication of the scientific worker. A life could be saved, depending on a research project, so there is no right to rest. You must work night and day, all the hours it is possible to work. You must work every day of the week. Today we can say that it is not one life—today it is the country, it is the country's life—that depends on the research efforts. That is why I would say that dedication is a very important principle that I should mention today as an essential thing, an essential principle, for researchers, revolutionary researchers, patriotic researchers.

It is very important because of the urgency we have attached to solving a great number of problems. In the health field, there is a world of problems. New medicines are being found; some of them have been mentioned here. There are others that have not been mentioned, but they may be relatively spectacular. A new field has opened up, a tremendous field for the country's development. Some high-technology medical equipment has been mentioned. We are working on that. They also gave a medal today to the Central Institute for Digital Research [ICID], for its contributions in this field.

We could have given a lot of medals here today [words indistinct]. However, there was not enough space. But there are many people and many centers in this country that deserve medals. Twelve were awarded. I think that, symbolically, the comrades who received them deserved them. They are representative. There are many centers and many researchers that could have received these medals here today. As you saw, they even gave a certificate to me. That was a surprise. No one had told me anything because, of course, if they had told me, they know I would have been opposed. They deceived me, or at least they withheld information from me. They did not tell me they were going to give me a certificate, and they surprised me here with the certificate. You know, I value it a lot. But I received it under protest.

I was saying that the ICID people received a medal. They have developed very important equipment. We have an entire research center to produce equipment to support science. Of course, they produce some very valuable medical equipment, but their basic function is to support science with this research and production center. They have developed the programs and automatic equipment for the CENPALAB [Center for Production of Laboratory Animals]. Of course, to make the programs and automatic equipment means that with $10,000 we can do something that would cost $100,000 if we imported it. With one-tenth the expense, we can solve the problem ourselves, because that center for laboratory animals is a very complex thing, very complex. It needs to monitor a large number of variables: temperature, humidity. This must be done automatically. We make this equipment at the research center here. All the research centers have very complicated equipment, more and more complicated equipment. The ICID is at the service of the other research centers, especially in the field of biotechnology. So they are making a colossal effort in this area.

I said before that the issue of scientific research had become a matter of mass participation. I should say something very important now, which is almost a privilege for us. In a capitalist country, all the research centers compete with each other. All the hospitals compete with each other. All the doctors, for example, compete with each other. A country that has social or socialized medicine can get all the doctors to cooperate with each other, all the medical institutions to cooperate with each other. But more important, it can get all the research centers to cooperate with each other.

Those 173 centers have to work in a coordinated way and support each other. If one has some very sophisticated equipment, it should use it not only for its work but also to provide service to several other centers. If another center needs research in that area, that center can support it and cooperate with it. This is why we have created the scientific hubs. In biotechnology.... [rephrases] For example, the western region should have three, in biotechnology, industry—because this is not in the field of biotechnology—and humanities, the humanities hub. The scientific hub for biotechnology has dozens of institutions. The agricultural centers are included, all of them, because that is a biological field. This includes genetic engineering, immunoassay, tropical medicine, even the food industry institute, CENIC [National Center for Scientific Research], the Finlay Institute, even a new pharmacy school that we have put under this area. The ICID is included. There are many centers that are part of this hub.

Those doing research on sugarcane are included. They meet every month. There is a vice minister of public health who presides over that hub. Close cooperation has been established between all of them. I say that this is a privilege of socialism. If each research center has a different owner, they are in competition with each other. They do not cooperate with anyone. They keep what they are doing secret. Of course, this does not happen by spontaneous generation. If you let them, scientists under socialism begin to emulate each other, and they begin to establish a kind of competition between each other.

Do not imagine, you visitors, that our scientific effort has been free from mistakes, blunders, and faults. I should say that when we started, we did not know anything about science. We wanted to work in science because all we had was a clear awareness that science was going to play a fundamental role, would have to play a fundamental role, in our country and the entire Third

World. It is one of the factors that determine the great difference between the developed world and the underdeveloped world.

You cannot call them anything else. Some people euphemistically say the developing world, when they should say the opposite: the underdeveloping world. Every day they get further apart, and there is a greater gap between the developed world and the underdeveloped world, the Third World. A determining factor of this enormous difference—which came about for historical reasons that this is not the time to analyze—has to do with science. They are the only ones who do research. In addition, they take away the best minds of the Third World. This is not because many intelligent people from the Third World lack patriotism, but rather that they like science, they have a scientific vocation, but they have nowhere to do research. They do not have equipment, laboratories, or anything. So they go. They leave their countries. They come back to visit from time to time.

The brain drain is one of the most dismal and harmful things the Third World has to endure. Anything that shines a little is taken away. Nothing is left. If there are no research centers, if some intelligent minds stand out, they are taken away. What is left for the Third World countries? It was very clear to us that science had to be promoted. But what was science? We did not really know. What was an academy of sciences? We did not really know.

Well, Rosa Elena has said that the first Academy of Sciences was founded in 1861. Of course, there was somewhat of a scientific tradition in Cuba, because there were some outstanding scientists, but they were only individuals, over the course of more than 100 years or so. I would say that for every scientist in Cuba during the last century, or even at the beginning of this century or before the revolution, today there are, there must be, at least 1,000 scientists. I am not counting university professors, university graduates, or all those who may do research.

But we did not know what an academy of sciences was. We made some initial efforts. We made some blunders. We did not have experience. Among other things, we did not have enough personnel. There were problems at certain times when industry and other sectors wanted to take the most skilled students. The universities wanted to keep them; the ministries wanted to keep them. Really, what needs to be done is to give priority to the scientific research centers. Those who have the most aptitude and ability must be channeled into science. Not so that they will be the only researchers, but so that they will be the vanguard of the researchers. Because there must be hundreds of thousands of researchers. Everyone must be a researcher. But we must train that vanguard.

Of course, we did not do everything well, but we have been learning. We were aware from the very first of the importance of science. I think today we know something, something but not enough, but we know something, about what we must do in this field. We have been discovering this. We have also given enormous importance to the application of scientific achievements. We would not accomplish anything if we did research and more research and put off applying those scientific achievements. Of course, we have been forming a truly scientific mentality in our country. We could say that this is now a policy. For a policy to work, there must be a basis, a culture. There must be education and awareness. We must form that awareness.

But I see that everyone in our country is being armed with the tool of science and research to confront our problems. I will not even try to list the number of fields and opportunities science offers our country. But I can tell you as friends that it is the fundamental tool the revolution has now, in this very difficult time. To tell the truth, we are encouraged by the achievements that have been made. We cannot say we are proud of these achievements, because we should have achieved even more. If we had had the experience we have today at the beginning, we would have been able to advance much further in this field.

But, of course, this special period itself is forcing us to progress more rapidly. It is not just that we are aware that science is a great tool. We are not only aware of its importance, but we have an essential need, and this essential need is to boost the sciences. Do not think that we are free from the danger of that phenomenon of brain drain. In fact, we have a high awareness and great patriotism among the vast majority of our scientists. But the enemy tries to take away our scientists. Every time we become outstanding in one area or another, they try and try to find out our technologies and discoveries. That is a kind of pressure that they exert on us, but it is not the kind of phenomenon that is seen in the Third World. This is a force directed at taking away our scientists.

Of course, in the face of this, we can show nothing but patriotism. We can show nothing but revolutionary awareness, which is what we have in these difficult times. No one knows what some of our scientists could be paid in other countries. It would be a lot [words indistinct] scientists who lead modest lives here, with the people and the revolution, for which they would give anything. Well, this is not only true of scientists. We must say the same about many of our athletes, who have given great evidence of patriotism. Some have been offered millions to become professionals, and in general—apart from some very exceptional exceptions—they have been steadfast. They live very modestly. They have [words indistinct] graduate from university. They are not professional athletes, but in general they complete a university degree, usually associated with physical education and sports.

I think these are things that can be said, and since you have forced me to speak, I wanted to mention them here, without meaning to run on at length. I have already mentioned one of the issues that must be inseparably

linked with our country's scientists, today and tomorrow, because when we come out of our special period, three fourths of the world will be in a special period. The inseparable factor is dedication. I am saying this now, not for our guests, but for all our dear comrades in science.

The second factor, the second idea, the second value—not because it is second in importance; it is as important as or more important than the first—is modesty. If I was asked what we wanted our scientists to be like, I would always say that we wanted them to be dedicated and modest. When self-sufficiency, arrogance, and overconfidence begin to take hold of some scientists, they stop being model scientists. No one—however much they know; no one, no matter what their intelligence quotient is—owes it entirely to themselves. In the first place, one's intelligence quotient is not a merit, but rather may have been inherited or must have been inherited. It is a genetic phenomenon, a combination of genes that made a person very intelligent.

Second, they must have had a family that would help that person to become educated, trained, and to study. They encouraged their vocation. Third, they must be in a society where they can study and go to university, without having to be the child of a millionaire or a rich person, simply with that innate capacity with which they came into the world. If society is not like that, the same thing will happen to them as happened to my little friends in Biran. None of them went to school. How many intelligent, capable children [words indistinct] first, second, and third grade in school. In Biran, no genius could get anywhere. No genius could reach sixth grade. There were hundreds of children. The son of Don Angel, the landowner, reached sixth grade. That was me. [laughter] Then he went to high school.

Then he studied at the university, in this case studied letters. I would have to be very critical of myself because I did not choose a science major. Really, I discovered later that it would have interested me more and was more important. To be a lawyer.... [rephrases] The last thing I wanted to do was to criticize my colleagues, because it would not be good for me to fight with them. [laughter] Because they are judges, magistrates, prosecutors, and everything. They are very powerful. But in the society in which I studied to be a lawyer—not this society—there were more than enough lawyers. There were so many that the revolution did not even want to hear about lawyers. The revolution did not show any concern about that until it discovered one day that it needed laws, justice, and that it needed many people who knew about law, and we promoted those studies.

Alright, but if I was born now, I would not study law, for sure. Well, if I had been born a while ago and was 15 years old now, [chuckles] or 16 or 17, and I graduated from high school, I would study for a technical, or if possible a scientific career. But, well, my little friends, the sons of peasants and workers, were not able (?to do this). So to become a scientist, you must be born into a society.... [rephrases] Because in the capitalist, developed, rich world, not all the intelligent people end up in science. In contrast, in our country, there is no obstacle that will prevent an intelligent person from going into science. There is no obstacle, whether the person is the son of a worker, peasant, agricultural worker or industrial worker, or a professional or whoever, from any background. There may be a child who has no father or mother, and is brought up in an institution or by a relative. No one needs any wealth to take up any university studies in our country.

Of course, this does not mean that everyone can study. At the beginning, we did promote having everyone go to university. We had a lot of needs. Now we have almost the opposite problem. There are very high numbers. We are forced to select people for university studies because if we did not, you can imagine, there would be too many. But the element that determines this is basically the young person's merits, the young person's abilities. I say basically, because sometimes the family also has an influence. We have seen that those who are born in a family environment at a high social level have certain social advantages over those who are born into a relatively middle- or lower-level household, because the family has a lot of influence in one's habits, culture, and inclination to study. Many of these things have an unquestionable influence. But, well, these are factors that are not political. They are social, and only time can bring about that equality among all families.

But in our country, all those who have suitable abilities have an opportunity. If such a society does not exist, if that genius is born in many Third World republics, he will never be a genius. His genius will not become a reality. There are many Third World countries where he would not have any opportunity. I should say more: Colonialism provided some scientists, but one every 50 years.

Capitalism here is Cuba.... [changes thought] Because there are two kinds of capitalism: that of the developed capitalist world, which colonized all the other countries, and the world of the underdeveloped countries, the Third World, which also have their capitalism, but it is underdeveloped capitalism. Whoever is born in a capitalist country of the Third World has very few opportunities to work as a scientist in his country. There are, naturally .... [rephrases] Not all countries are in the same situation. But his opportunities will be minimal. Unfortunately, that is how it is.

Some governments show more concern; others less. Some have made an effort; others have not. Some allocate more resources; some less. Of course, we should carry out a campaign to promote science in the Third World. We must create an awareness in favor of science in the Third World. Often when I talk with political leaders, I bring up these subjects, and in Guadalajara also, at the famous meeting at which a lot was said about integration, and a lot was said about neoconservatism. Everyone gave an opening speech there and spoke three

or four times about each of the topics. I should say that I also spoke about the different topics. We were forced to be brief because there were a lot of speakers. Here there are only two or three of us, and I can speak a little longer. But there, I had eight or 10 minutes.

I used one speech to urge the governments to work for public health in their countries. I told them that they could do a lot with very little resources. They do not have to wait for development. They do not have to wait for development to reduce the average infant mortality rate in Latin America from more than 60 to 20 per 1,000 live births. If they were going to reduce it to our level, 10.7, they would need a significant level of medical development. But to go from 60 to 20 per 1,000 is possible for any Third World country, if they decide to spend a little money on it, if they devoted to public health some of the money that leaves through capital flight, that is wasted, even, many times, the money that is embezzled.

Of course, I did not say to any of my colleagues that I was thinking of any specific country. That would have shown a lack of respect or consideration, if you wish, if I were to talk about embezzlement at a meeting of leaders. My good intention was really to promote.... [changes thought] I did not want to say that, not at all. I met many outstanding, intelligent, capable, and honest leaders at that meeting. But I am talking about society. Unfortunately, in general, our societies in the Third World have very serious problems when it comes to resource management.

There are very serious problems with capital flight. That is a fact. But I urged them to work to promote public health. From our own experience, we understand that you can do a lot with a little in this field. The second exhortation I made was in favor of science. I urged them to pay attention to scientific research and to give resources to scientific research. Really, my conscience is at rest because I urged that. There is not enough awareness of these problems. There is not enough.

Perhaps more awareness has been acquired about education. There is a little more development in education, in spite of the illiteracy problems that persist, and the school drop-out problem, and the fact that more than half of the people in many countries do not reach sixth grade. But, well, there is no awareness with respect to health and scientific research in any case. I felt the need and the duty to make an effort in that regard.

But, well, to conclude, I was defending the thesis that genius is nothing without the group, without the society, without others. Without the nation, it is nothing. If a genius is a disinterested and a noble genius, willing to dedicate the intelligence he received from nature to the service of his people, then that genius is nothing without the revolution.

Today, as we commemorate the 30th anniversary of those times when, without knowing absolutely anything, we created an Academy of Sciences, let me uphold these two values for scientists: dedication and modesty. I am not going to disavow the bit about socialism or death; it is implicit, and I add: Fatherland or death, we will win. [applause]

Russian Participation in Reception Condemned

FL2902181292 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 1255 GMT 29 Feb 92

[Elson Concepcion report from 29 February GRANMA: "Stateless Spree in the Russian Tavern"]

[Text] (Delgay Cobaliev), head of the Russian delegation to the 48th meeting of the UN Human Rights Commission, has just held a reception in Switzerland for a mixed group of Cuban counterrevolutionaries and U.S. public officials. It was viewed by the British news agency REUTERS as one of the most curious cocktail parties ever held in diplomatic circles in Geneva.

Nevertheless, its tone was consistent with that of the United States, which once again has staged a typical show [previous word in English] in the commission's current session to promote the condemnation of Cuba. Years ago they were represented by a paralytic writer whose most deserved tribute was his U.S. citizenship. Now they have directly and discreetly increased the pressure. They have designated Dan Quayle, who as far as we know does not presume to be a poet, and who is known for his wobbly legs for having evaded the Vietnam War, to demand that our country be condemned and thrown out of the commission.

Drunk with potency and arrogance, the diminutive (?puppet) vice president considered the moment appropriate to take advantage of Yankee hegemony in this increasingly unipolar world. His intervention, and that of the reporter, received the appropriate response from Cuban delegate Raul Roa Kouri. Cuba had not yet been condemned, but the U.S. delegation and their occasional allies had already begun to cry victory and celebrate with canapes, vodka, and Coca-Cola, according to international press agencies. [words indistinct]

According to remarks made to the EFE news agency by a guest at the ceremony, the reception was planned months earlier as a great blow to the imminent round of votes eventually condemning Cuba. We would have to ask why representatives of a nation that still figures in international listings as a power, not as a Third World country, a nation with nuclear missles, would behave in such a despicable and disloyal manner toward a country that is not only related by diplomatic, business, and even military ties, but also by a friendship that has endured hard times.

Not only did the head of the Russian delegation to the Commission on Human Rights in Geneva offend the Cuban people, he left important sectors of the public of that country perplexed. An advance reaction is offered by the British press agency when it comments that outstanding diplomats, who had been in the mission for a long time and who were used to defending Cuba at the

UN agency rather than helping the campaign backed by the United States against the communist-ruled island, were curious about the decision. In another dispatch, the same agency points out that the diplomats attended with impassive faces.

The host, (Cobaliev), president of the Human Rights Commission of the Russian parliament, rehearsed an explanation that was insulting and nostalgic: I can remember very well what it feels like to be in prison. During those times, we were very grateful to the organizations that are present tonight; the moment has come for Russia to pay its debt to the international community of human rights.

With this volatile declaration by (Cobaliev), who had already committed the vote of his country to the most inhumane cause of the right, headed by the United States, things became clear. (Cobaliev's) gratitude was not directed toward the Cuban parasites because they have never said a word in favor of Mr. (Cobaliev) in the past. His reflection reveres the Yankee organizations that were present that evening in Geneva. It is perfectly clear that the debt he pays with the reception is not Russia's debt but his own.

We do not have (Cobaliev's) political history at hand, nor do we know the reason for his imprisonment, but applying the very typical proverb, tell me who your friends are, and I will tell you who you are [dime con quien andas y te dire quien eres], and assuming that we know the lineage of the individuals with whom the Russian parliamentarian associates, we have sufficient elements to judge him by his drinking buddies.

If there was any doubt as to whom the true hosts were, the guests reflect the U.S. organization Freedom House, which covers the travel expenses of the Cuban parasites as the sponsors of the ceremony. Therfore, if we gather the Russian parliamentarian, the Cuban parasites, the members of the Yankee delegation, the representatives of the United States Information Agency [USIA] in Switzerland, and Freedom House, we would have the complete picture of the stateless spree in the former Soviet headquarters, which has been converted into a Russian tavern.

We will add only the comment of a REUTERS correspondent: On a table outside the reception hall, the guests could choose from a large variety of pamphlets published in the United States that attacked the past Soviet Caribbean ally for human rights violations. [words indistinct] The headquarters of the flamboyant Russian Embassy has been converted into a newsstand of Yankee publications. Any of the czars, except the one who sold Alaska for a trifle, would have banished the person responsible for such an action to Siberia without contemplation.

For Russians left in poverty and unemployment, the concern of their representative for the alleged violation of human rights in Cuba may be good news. It will permit them to hope that their leaders will also worry about their own human rights violations to prevent veterans of the great homeland war from dying on the day when they try to commemorate the anniversary of the Red Army.

No Russian voice, much less the head of the Russian delegation, will stand in Geneva to remember Lieutenant General Nickolay Peskov.

Antidrug Cooperation Agreement To Be Reviewed

FL2802151792 Havana Radio Progreso Network in Spanish 1200 GMT 28 Feb 92

[Text] Cuba and Venezuela are going to review the cooperation agreement aimed at preventing and combatting the illegal traffic of narcotics and psychotropic substances that has been in effect between the two countries since 1990. Cuban Ambassador to Venezuela Norberto Hernandez Curbelo has met with Venezuelan Foreign Ministry officials to analyze certain aspects of this treaty.

In diplomatic circles in Caracas, it is said that Venezuelan Foreign Minister Armando Duran will probably travel to Havana in March to analyze possible changes to the treaty with his Cuban colleague, Isidoro Malmierca.

Commentary Views Drug-Trafficking Position

PA2902173492 Havana Radio Havana Cuba in Spanish 1330 GMT 29 Feb 92

[Roberto Morejon commentary]

[Text] The fallacy of alleged Cuban participation in international drug trafficking has been used by the United States on numerous occasions to try to involve Cuba in that repugnant activity. In this way, Washington once again attempts to tarnish the Cuban Government's clean image on its position toward these illegal merchants.

Consequently, the thesis of an article appearing in the Mexican daily EL FINANCIERO is understandable. According to the article, the U.S. intelligence services are allegedly preparing new covert operations against Cuba to link the country to international drug trafficking.

EL FINANCIERO columnist Carlos Facio reported that the United States is encouraging the establishment of what he termed shadow companies. These companies would then establish joint ventures with Cuban companies.

According to Facio, capital investments to establish these companies would come from drug-trafficking revenues. Washington's plan would then be to discredit the current Cuban commercial policy toward joint ventures with foreign investors.

The White House's attempts are merely an additional step to further promote Cuba's isolation due to its decision to continue on the socialist path, despite the fall of socialism in eastern Europe. It so happens that Cuba,

a country where there is no drug production, processing, trafficking, or consumption, has shown enough evidence of its willingness to fight these type of activities. Cuba has also made it clear that it would not participate in any type of negotiation with companies or investors suspected of participating in drug trafficking.

Cuba's geographical location makes it an area through which part of the drugs flowing toward the United States must pass. The biggest drug market in the world is in the United States.

Cuban authorities have implemented a systematic persecution system against drug traffickers because their million dollar shipments normally pass near Cuba's coastlines. This effort, which is greater than this country's financial capability, resulted in the seizure of 74 sea vessels, 31 aircraft, and the arrest of 428 drug traffickers of various nationalities between 1970 and June 1991.

As is aptly pointed out in the Facio article, Havana has publicly stated its willingness to sign a bilateral cooperation agreement in the fight against drug trafficking. Washington refuses the agreement on political grounds. As long as that attitude is maintained, the United States will be blocking a more coordinated regional action against illegal drug trafficking.

Oil Extraction in Matanzas Reaches 38,000 Tons

FL2902192392 Havana Radio Reloj Network in Spanish 1503 GMT 29 Feb 92

[Text] Matanzas oil workers extracted 36,000 tons of so-called black gold in January. That figure is double last year's figure for the same period. Nevertheless, to reach the 700,000 tons of this year's demanding program, they must maintain a monthly average of 58,000 tons, which would be the greatest challenge in the history of Matanzas' oil workers.

In drilling, an activity of great importance in increasing the extraction of hydrocarbons, only 50 percent was acheived: in other words, 3,000 meters deep. During January, the oil workers of Matanzas tested an area to discover its potential in natural gas and oil. They supplied more than 620,000 cubic meters of gas to industries in Cardenas Municipality.

Country Exports Cane-Cutting Combines

FL2802195892 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 1800 GMT 28 Feb 92

[Text] Fifty Cuban KTP-2 model cane-cutting combines have been exported to several Latin American countries. Most of these machines are already in the fields cutting cane after having been purchased by growers who appreciate the advantages the Cuban KTP-2's offer. These machines can cut cane that is still green as opposed to other machines that can cut only cane that has first been burned.

The new model Cuban cane-cutting machine, built at the 60th Anniversary of the October Revolution Factory in Holguin, has been equiped with end-cutting devices, thereby meeting a requirement from buyers in Brazil and Mexico.

These Cuban combines have also been purchased by other countries, including some Asian countries, where they have been well received. Our country has also exported to these same markets small lots of cane-towing vehicles [remolcadores de cana], plows, and cranes and is preparing new shipments of the cane-cutting combines.

* Special Period Difficulties Discussed

* Socialism Defended

92CA0087A Havana TRABAJADORES in Spanish 27 Jan 92 p 2

[Commentary by Renato Recio]

[Text] The natural clash of ideas taking place in the particular political situation we are now in brings us to a question: are the problems of this special period and the sacrifices we must make caused primarily by external factors, or does their origin stem from some intrinsic incapacity of the social system the Cuban people have chosen to organize and develop their country?

The answer to this question is obviously a defining one which places a person squarely in one camp or another in terms of political philosophy.

We revolutionaries in this country, who unequivocally include the great majority of the people, are convinced that this special period—conceived with foresight to deal with the persistent aggressive policy of the United States—has been greatly affected by the spectacular debacle of socialism in other countries and the elimination or steep decline of vital supplies. This, combined with the resurgence of the imperialist embargo, is in reality causing us to suffer the terrible consequences of a dual embargo.

We must not forget that the enemies of the Revolution are using all means possible to try to persuade those who are willing to listen to them that it is not this dual embargo, but instead our own socialist system which is creating shortages of supplies needed for production and services, and creating the difficult situation we are experiencing today.

Because of its oversimplification, this argument might be simply brushed away and dismissed, but it seems to me that, as it is being widely used by the counterrevolutionary disinformation media, it is our duty to think about the issue and fully master the argument which will prove it wrong.

First of all, we must remember that in this smear campaign directed against the socialist community, capitalism has not proven its superiority as a system, nor has socialism really shown its lack of viability.

Capitalism is ecstatic about the crisis in socialism, but it has demonstrated no ability to resolve its colossal failure in all of the Third World or even to attenuate the processes of inequality, instability, and violence that are inherent in this system.

The debacle in the socialist community did not come about from socialist causes, but rather because of the violation, suppression, and negation of basic principles which a society of this type must necessarily foster.

The magnitude of the economic impact Cuba has been facing since 1989 is of such a nature that it would have resulted in the collapse of any other country.

But we have managed not only to protect services which are vital to the people (some of them at a high level, like health care and education) but also to ensure our development objectives without making the slightest concession affecting our national sovereignty and independence.

Is this not convincing proof of the strength of socialist ideology and its ability to cope with even the gravest situations?

If imperialism and all its open or covert ideologists are so convinced of the inability of the Cuban people and of their socialist system to solve their problems, why do they continue to resort with increasing force to sabotage and economic, diplomatic, and political embargos?

Is it not that they are more afraid of us now than in the past? Is it not that, behind their mask of euphoria, they perceive that socialism in Cuba, with its indigenous roots, its capacity for innovation, its advanced process of true correction and not involution as happened after the word "perestroyka" was coined, with its great leader and its national unity, is a bird of another feather and not just one more domino in a set which, when placed in a row, all fall down?

Certainly, we have made mistakes in Cuba—and unfortunately the Soviet Union's collapse is complicating everything in the most creative and fertile moment when we are correcting our past errors—but none of these mistakes, or even all of them together, could have caused such a special period in a time of peace.

What we have done could certainly have been done better, but what was done still means that today no one is left destitute with no resources; though we have much less, everyone still has the essentials.

In these times of forced reflection and reconsideration, the Cuban people and their revolutionary leadership cannot be denied the merit of having discovered in time some dangerous errors that were distorting the construction of our socialism and might have brought us, like others, to ruin.

What terrible consequences we would have suffered with the disaster in the Soviet Union and East Europe if we had not begun our correction process before those events happened.

To mention just a single consequence, let me say that we would have been greatly weakened, making it difficult to continue the historic work of all the generations of Cubans who have kept up the struggle for independence against the forces seeking to subjugate us.

The malicious or careless now trying to blame our present hard times on internal causes cannot find a single vacillation of the Revolution in defending our national sovereignty from the United States, but no one can doubt that the conscious promoters of this unfair and deceitful criticism, if given the opportunity, would be capable of selling out our nation, or even worse, giving it away, and handing this "ripe fruit" over to the Yankees, who have coveted it since 1807.

To the weak, cowardly, and psuedo learned theoreticians of the capitalist restoration who are trying to win us over to the message of their master, using their little words wrapped in the rhetoric of capitulation, we can answer with the words of Marti: "Poverty will come to an end; what does not end is the dishonor which, using the pretext of poverty, men bring down upon themselves."

* External Trade Detailed

92CA0087B Havana TRABAJADORES in Spanish 27 Jan 92 p 2

[Text]

Some Numbers on the Difficulties

About 70 percent of Cuba's foreign trade was with the USSR, so it is easy to understand the consequences our country faced when, all of a sudden, our imports were cut by 50 percent, our fuel supplies declined substantially, and our purchasing power shrank when the price of sugar abruptly dropped.

An idea of what all this has meant can be obtained from the fact that by December 1991 only 1.673 billion pesos' worth of goods had been received from the USSR. This is 2.15 billion less than what had been scheduled for 1991, and 4.15 billion less than what Cuba received in 1990.

Only small amounts or none at all of the agreed upon amounts of food, raw materials, equipment, and parts reached Cuba. For example, only 40 percent of the expected quantity of food for livestock, which is ultimately converted into milk, meat, and eggs, had been received by December.

Trade with East Europe has virtually come to a halt, and that has created new difficulties with some supplies, involving an amount exceeding 500 million pesos.

One of the most traumatic factors involving trade with the former USSR is related to the price of sugar, since its price declined in 1991 by $300 per ton. At the present time the world sells sugar at special prices, like what the European Economic Community pays—about 23 cents a pound—established in the Lome Convention; there are preferential quota systems; some countries grant subsidies to their domestic producers with high production costs; and there is also what Fidel accurately called "the world's dumping ground," a surplus of sugar production with permanently depressed prices covering only a small percentage of what the world consumes.

Oil prices, though, are not determined by production costs, nor do the sacrosanct market laws, relations between supply and demand, govern them at all closely. These prices are arbitrary, monopolistic prices, which are essentially established by consensus among the big producers.

Haiti

Cedras Proclaims Army's Neutrality on Agreement

PA0103145592 Paris AFP in Spanish 1911 GMT 29 Feb 92

[Text] Port-au-Prince, 29 Feb (AFP)—General Raoul Cedras, Haitian Army commander in chief, on 29 February proclaimed his institution's neutrality regarding the agreement signed on 23 February in Washington within the framework of the search for a negotiated solution to the crisis in Haiti.

In a letter to Prime Minister-Designate Rene Theodore, the general states: "The Haitian Armed Forces will not be manipulated (...) to tip the balance in anyone's favor." The letter was made public on 29 February.

(On 27 February, Theodore said during a news conference that Gen. Cedras had told him "privately that he endorses" the agreement signed in Washington by the Haitian negotiators.)

Cedras acknowledged his conversation with Theodore and said that he "will not state his opinion on the Washington agreement protocol so neither he nor the Armed Forces will be accused of trying to influence the executive branch or the National Assembly into adopting any particular position on the agreement."

The general noted: "I think it is about time all the Haitian people and institutions assume their responsibilities so we may remain a proud, honorable, free, and sovereign nation, with representatives and leaders capable of making sensible and patriotic decisions while showing respect for our laws and our Constitution."

Council of Ministers Holds Extraordinary Session

FL2802172092 Port-au-Prince Radio Nationale in Creole 1100 GMT 28 Feb 92

[Text] The Council of Ministers, presided over by lawyer Joseph Nerette, met in an extraordinary session on 27 February at 1500 GMT. The Council discussed recent events. Members of the government reminded the group that the provisional government resulted from a parliamentary act under Article 149 of the Constitution. Their plan is to publish their major concerns about infringements of the Constitution within the framework of the search for a solution through negotiation.

They advise the president of the Republic to ask the presidents of the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies—who have signed an agreement with a Haitian president other than the one constitutionally invested with powers as provisional president by the National Assembly—for explanations.

The members of the government also advise that the government has never intended to hang on to power, contrary to popular opinion. They do, however, want to collectively protect the country and its institutions until power is transferred. They wish to reaffirm the government's willingness to support any negotiated solution to the Haitian crisis, provided that it is not contrary to the Constitution and does not strike a blow at the country's independence.

Executive Meets Legislature on Protocol Agreement

FL2802192492 Port-au-Prince Radio Metropole in French 1145 GMT 28 Feb 92

[Text] On 27 February, provisional President Joseph Nerette, Prime-Minister Jean-Jacques Honorat, and the presidents of the National Assembly met for for more than two hours at the National Palace. At the meeting, Senator Dejean Belizaire and Deputy Alexandre Medard spoke with the provisional executive. Officially nothing came of this meeting, but it is known that the protocol agreement was presented to President Joseph Nerette. It was the first time that Senator Dejean Belizaire and Deputy Alexandre Medard had met with the provisional president since the agreements were signed in Washington on 23 February.

If the government has not yet expressed an opinion on these agreements, it is to be noted that National Radio and Television are conducting a campaign against the agreements in the form of special broadcasts: Aristide No; Democracy Yes; as well as in debates carried by both media. Remember that the provisional government had already kept its distance from the agreements in Washington at the departure of the parliamentary delegation on 21 February.

Yesterday, in a Council of Ministers meeting, members of the provisional government asked the parliamentary

delegation that signed the protocol of agreement for explanations and stressed that this government is constitutional.

Senators Comment on Agreement Implementation

FL2802181892 Port-au-Prince Radio Soleil Network in Creole 1200 GMT 28 Feb 92

[Excerpts] Many people expect disagreements during the next few days between parliamentarians and the executive branch on the application of the 23 February agreement. Some senators shed some light on this matter over the microphone of one of our colleagues. According to Senator Dejean Belizaire, the parliamenarians will respect the executive because it is they who invested it with powers, but they will also expect executive support for the smooth application of the 23 February protocol agreement. Let us listen to Jean-Marie Erinac's report:

[Begin recording] [Erinac] We are shepherds, not bulls. Our role is to lead the herd to its pasture, stated Senator Ebrane Cadet, and to resolve the fears of those who expect disagreement between the parliamentarians and the executive on the agreement protocol. Sen. Cadet further stated that no matter what differences they may have, the parliamentarians and the executive will sit around the same table to find a way to progress because they are defending the country. [passage omitted]

Sen. Ebrane Cadet is not opposed to the protocol agreement signed by the parliamentarians and Father Jean-Bertrand Aristide. He thinks the nations's interests must come first, because the fate of six million people is at stake. [passage omitted]

Sen. Dejean Belizaire says they will study ways to implement the decisions they must make. He said that the National Assembly has invested the current executive with power; therefore they will respect it. They will seek the executive's support and assistance in implementing the protocol agreement they have signed. [passage omitted]

Sen. Wesner Emmanuel said they are up against a wall, but a step will have been taken if the agreement is implemented. Both senators and deputies are working on the protocol to see what the next step is in implementing the agreement. [passage omitted]

When will the protocol agreement be ratified? How will it be done? Will it occur before or after the current government's resignation?

[Emmanuel] I can only give you my personal opinion. I have come to a session. I have been sitting here since morning. We are waiting for the other parliamentarians, the other senators. The Chamber of Deputies has already begun to work. We are waiting for the senators so we can open the session, make a decision, state our opinion on the protocol, and determine what steps are necessary for its implementation.

[Erinac] Everyone's attention is now focused on the National Assembly's efforts to find a solution to the country's crisis, which has already lasted too long. Some observers believe it is time for national unity. Shouts are coming from the country's rooftops for all Haitians to sit at the same table and discuss the country's business, because the intellectuals who are thinking for the country now must sit back and consider the poor, who have been suffering too long. [end recording]

MOP Expresses Support for Protocol Agreement

FL2802193692 Port-au-Prince Radio Metropole in French 1700 GMT 28 Feb 92

[Text] The Movement for the Country's Organization [MOP] supports the protocol agreement signed on 23 February in Washington. For the MOP, the signing of the protocol by Father Aristide and the parliamentary mission under OAS auspices clearly shows that a coup can not threaten, here or elsewhere, the people's sovereignty, which was clearly expressed through credible elections. The MOP is inviting parliamentarians to take all necessary measures to immediately ratify the protocol.

FNCD Supports Agreement

FL2802195792 Port-au-Prince Radio Metropole in French 1700 GMT 28 Feb 92

[Text] The parliamentary bloc of National Front for Change and Democracy [FNCD] senators and deputies is ready to bring its firm support to the Washington agreement protocol. According to Senator Wesner Emmanuel, the legislators are also ready to vote for Theodore. Let us listen to his statement:

[Begin recording] [Emmanuel] We have a crisis committee at the Front that met yesterday. Together we studied the latest document and decided that the Front must totally support its application.

[Unidentified reporter] Has the FNCD raised any objections that could make the application of the agreement difficult?

[Emmanuel] No. Listen carefully: It is a document with various points. It is now a mater of applying these points. We know it deals with a difficult matter. We are dealing with human beings. We cannot assume that the task will be easy. There are necessarily some difficult points. We are ready to cooperate to overcome the difficulties, break down the obstacles, and put the country on the right track.

[Reporter] Does your cooperation in the FNCD mean that FNCD bloc in parliament is going to vote for the agreement protocol first and then ratify Rene Theodore as prime minister?

[Emmanuel] The first document is the agreement protocol. The bloc is going to vote for the ratification of the agreement. There is also a document for the ratification of the prime-minister. It is the document signed by

President Aristide and Rene Theodore. We now have the green light to also vote in favor of the ratification of the prime minister.[end recording]

Theodore Denies Country Under OAS Control

FL2802174492 Port-au-Prince Radio Soleil Network in Creole 1200 GMT 28 Feb 92

[Text] During his news conference, Rene Theodore denied the charge that Haiti is under the control of the OAS. The prime minister-designate said the agreement was signed by Haitians and pointed out that Haiti must work on its own problems but with the help of all other countries.

Theodore further stated that he is not opposed to sending an OAS civilian mission to reinforce the democratic institutions in Haiti, but he believes further negotiations should be conducted to set up the travel conditions of that civilian mission and the number of people it will include.

Theodore Interviewed on Agreement, Ratification

FL2802202792 Port-au-Prince LE NOUVELLISTE in French No. 34.247 27 Feb 92 pp 1,2

["Exclusive" interview with Prime Minister-Designate Rene Theodore by Anaise Chavenet; place and date not given: "I Have Every Chance of Being Ratified"]

[Excerpts] In an exclusive interview by Anaise Chavenet, Rene Theodore said after his news conference that he has "every chance" of being ratified by the National Assembly as prime minister, the post for which he was proposed by the Haitian parliament. Theodore made that statement to a colleague, denying allegations that he had been chosen for the post by U.S. Ambassador Alvin P. Adams.

Concerning the formation of the future coalition ministerial cabinet, Rene Theodore said he had not discussed "names" with Jean-Bertrand Aristide, pointing out that the "prime minister is supreme" in that matter. In the interview below, he did not rule out the possibility that personalities from the Preval government would be reassigned within the coalition government. [passage omitted]

[LE NOUVELLISTE (LN)] It was noted on 28 February, upon your return from Washington, that you left the airport in a U.S. Embassy car. How can you explain that?

[Rene Theodore (RT)] It was only a matter of courtesy to me.

[LN] How so?

[RT] I returned from Washington...I was walking through the airport looking for my own car when I was directed to a U.S. Embassy car, a bullet-proof car, and so on, for security reasons. I did not refuse.

[LN] Do you think it is something simple? You do not seem to give it the importance others give it.

[RT] Obviously, I would have preferred that the Haitian Armed Forces protect me on the trip from the airport to my home. That was not exactly the case. But I am used to traveling, leaving the airport, taking my car, and going home without trouble and without a bodyguard....

[LN] The agreement that you signed with Aristide says that you have committed yourself, as far as possible, to meeting with him every 15 days. Do you believe that is feasible?

[RT] We will see in actual practice. That is why it says, "as far as possible," which makes the agreement more flexible.

[LN] It implies that you will have to travel....

[RT] That I will travel, that I will send an emissary, or that a modus operandi will be found somehow.

[LN] The matter of the prime minister has caused some frustration. There has been supposed frustration within the Movement for the Establishment of Democracy in Haiti after your designation at the expense of Marc Bazin, whose name was also proposed by the Senate. Have you been in touch with Mr. Bazin since then? Do you feel he has been willing to cooperate with your government..?

[RT] There was a mutual commitment on that question. I do not know what Mr. Bazin will do about it.

[LN] When was that commitment?

[RT] When the two names were presented as possible prime minister-designates, before a choice had been made. I hope the commitment will be respected.

[LN] What was that commitment?

[RT] Political support for the negotiated solution no matter who is chosen prime minister.

[LN] Have you spoken with Bazin since then?

[RT] Yes, we have talked since I was designated.

[LN] Have you had encouraging indications that the commitment is still in force?

[RT] I hope so.

[LN] By the way, what are your chances of being ratified by the chambers?

[RT] Every chance.

[LN] In conclusion, will you be the prime minister who studies modes for Aristide's return in the event that this happens, then give his place to another head of government once he returns, or will the cohabitation be able to continue?

[RT] It will be able to continue. Everything will depend on the National Assembly and the evolution of things in Haiti.

Deputies Propose Ban on Weapons in Legislature

FL2802222392 Port-au-Prince Radio Soleil Network in Creole 1930 GMT 28 Feb 92

[Text] Three deputies have proposed a resolution to prevent deputies from entering the Chamber of Deputies with weapons to guarantee the safety of all deputies during the sessions. Such a resolution also provides for numerous sanctions against deputies who do not comply with the rule.

When questioned by our reporter on the matter, Deputy Edmonde Supplice Beauzil, one of the authors of the resolution, indicated that more tolerance is needed inside the parliament so democracy will mean more for every deputy. Deputy Beauzil also added that the deputies must provide an example of how people live under democratic conditions, because they are responsible for establishing democracy.

[Begin Deputy Beauzil recording] The purpose of this resolution is to avoid damage inside the National Assembly, because when someone has the legal right to carry firearms, no one can tell him not to bring them inside the building. Yesterday, after what happened between Deputy Josue Lafrance and Deputy Antoine Joseph, and what happened this morning between Deputy Rene Emmanuel and Deputy (Edmond Merol), Deputy Rene pointed his gun at Deputy (Merol), we decided to propose a resolution that no one can enter the parliament carrying a weapon. Everyone will be secure.

Enemies can be made when people do not share the same opinions. People become excited, and then a person can easily use his weapon. We have experience with this kind of situation. Since it has happened more than three times, we decided to work on a resolution to stop these acts inside the parliament.

The resolution outlines what a deputy should do with his weapon before entering the parliament and includes penalties for when a deputy breaks the rules. [end recording].

Remember that this resolution was written after Deputy Josue Lafrance attacked Deputy Antoine Joseph during the 26 February session. The three deputies who proposed the resolution are: Rindal Canel, Evans Beaubrun, and Edmonde Supplice Beauzil.

Jamaica

Government Encouraged by Haitian Agreement

FL2802195992 Bridgetown CANA in English 1804 GMT 28 Feb 92

[Text] Kingston, Jamaica, Feb 28, CANA—Jamaica said Thursday night that it was encouraged by the agreement on a mechanism to end Haiti's political crisis and said it hoped the plan would facilitate an early return to democracy and the restoration of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide. Jamaica also said that it would give all support of the Organisation of American States' "bid to restore constituional government" and that it would advise the hemispheric body "as to what personnel we are able to provide and any other help that is within our capability."

Aristide, overthrown in a military coup last September, and members of Haiti's military-backed government this week signed an agreement that would ensure the president's return to office and the establishment of a government with Communist leader, Rene Theodore as prime minister. However, the deal will provide an amnesty for those who took part in the coup and apparently leave in place Army leader, Raoul Cedras.

"We fervently hope that this agreement will facilitate the restoration of democracy to Haiti, in returning to power the constitutionally-elected president, Jean Bertrand Aristide, and urge all parties to move quickly to ratify and implement the provisions of the agreement," said the statement issued by Prime Minister Michael Manley's office.

Aristide appears to have second thoughts about Cedras remaining as head of the Haitain Army, a point that could derail the agreement. But Manley, who has been active in supporting Aristide's legitimacy and was among the first head of government to receive the deposed haitian leader after his overthrow, seems keen to nudge Aristide into fulfilling all commitments.

Honduras

Minister Replies to Salvadoran Protest Note

PA2802225992 Tegucigalpa EL HERALDO in Spanish 28 Feb 92 p 40

["Press Communique No. 012-92" issued by the Press and Information Directorate of the Foreign Ministry in Tegucigalpa on 27 February]

[Text] The Foreign Relations Secretariat hereby informs the national and international public that, in regard to the protest note issued by the Republic of El Salvador's Foreign Ministry concerning Honduran Air Force aircraft overflying Salvadoran territory, Foreign Relations Minister Jaime Guell Bogran deems it appropriate to reply as follows:

Official Note No. 071-DSS
His Excellency Mr. Ricardo Valdivieso
Deputy Minister of Foreign Relations
Minister In Charge
San Salvador, El Salvador
Mr. Deputy Minister:

I am honored to address Your Excellency in reply to your note dated 27 February, wherein you expressed your protest to my government for the alleged flight of two A-37 aircraft belonging to the Honduran Air Force that at 0750 on 24 February supposedly overflew, at an approximate altitude of 3,000 meters, the regions of Joaca and Perquin, Morazan Department; at 0950 zones in Chalatenango, and at 1015 the northern zones of San Fernando and Perquin, Morazan Department.

In this respect, I must express to Your Excellency that the Salvadoran [as published] Government was surprised by such totally groundless charges. We emphatically reject said protest.

In accordance with your note, the A-37 aircraft allegedly overflew Salvadoran territory for two hours and 25 minutes, at an altitude of 3,000 meters. This is impossible, considering that the cruising range of this type of aircraft is very limited. This can be attested by the Salvadoran Air Force, which also uses this type of aircraft.

In fact, the A-37's cruising range is only two hours and 30 minutes under optimum conditions, and flying at an altitude of 20,000 feet. This makes it quite impossible for these planes to take off from their bases in northern Honduras, fly to El Salvador, and overfly the country for the amount of time you indicated in your note. To accomplish this the aircraft would have had to fly over Honduran territory for at least three hours and five minutes. In addition, the pilot would have been forced to save enough fuel for at least 30 minutes in case of an emergency.

It is important to point out, Mr. Deputy Minister, that of late some Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front spokesmen have also falsely charged Honduran Air Force G-2 aircraft with having violated Salvadoran airspace. These charges are equally false. It is sufficient to point out that the Honduran Air Force does not have this type of aircraft.

In conclusion, please allow me to emphasize the fact that my government wishes to maintain the friendliest relations with all countries, particularly countries such as El Salvador, with whom we share a common heritage and destiny. Needless to say, an event such as this benefits neither of us, and serves no useful purpose.

I take the opportunity to restate and express to Your Excellency my warmest consideration.

[Signed] Jaime Guell Brogan
Foreign Relations Minister by Decree.
[Issued] Tegucigalpa, M.D.C. 27 February 1992.
Press and Information Directorate
Foreign Ministry

Armed Forces' Statement

PA2802185492 San Pedro Sula LA PRENSA in Spanish 28 Feb 92 p 5

[Text] Tegucigalpa—Armed Forces Spokesman Colonel Napoleon Santos said on 27 February: "I do not know what the Salvadorans' intentions are by lying," after stating that the Honduran Government's order is to respect other people's rights and to guarantee the security of Hondurans.

"To say that Honduran Air Force airplanes overflew Salvadoran airspace is a big lie," Santos said and added "the rule is to keep our distance because this is what the top authorities have ordered. Their foreign policy is to respect other countries."

Regarding the assertion by guerrilla Nidia Diaz of the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front that the Honduran General Staff admitted to the incursion claiming that it was a mistake, Santos said "this is false, we have not said that."

"The Armed Forces give international and public assurances that such an incursion did not take place," the military spokesman stressed.

Bank President on Inflation, Leaving Office

PA2802200392 San Pedro Sula LA PRENSA in Spanish 28 Feb 92 p 5

[Text] Tegucigalpa—Ricardo Maduro, president of the Central Bank of Honduras (BCH), said on 27 February that inflation has ceased to be a problem for the Honduran economy. He also confirmed he will leave his office at the BCH on 2 March.

Maduro granted an interview in Washington and said that, in the first two months of this year, inflation has maintained a growth of only 0.2 percent.

He stated inflation reached 36 percent in 1990 and in 1989 it reached 21.4 percent. He also reported it is expected inflation will be 12 percent or less in 1992.

The official gave a luncheon in Washington for the executives of the international financial organizations and U.S. Government officials for the economic support they have given to Honduras during the first two years of President Callejas' government.

On that occasion, Maduro told his guests that he would leave the presidency of the BCH on 2 March to become presidency minister. He guaranteed that Honduran economic policies would not undergo any changes.

"We have proved—with facts, numbers, and results—that the hardest part of the economic adjustment program is over and that prices are stable, public finances have improved, and the government's internal and external credibility is in an enviable position, even at a Latin American level," he said.

Maduro said there are no doubts or lack of trust as the economic program has had good results, but that the government must work so the economic measures are maintained.

Nicaragua

News Conference Held on Economic Growth, Tasks

PA2902021792 Managua Radio Nicaragua Network in Spanish 1421 GMT 28 Feb 92

[News conference by Finance Minister Emilio Pereira Alegria, Presidency Minister Antonio Lacayo, Central Bank President Silvio de Franco, Construction and Transportation Minister Jaime Mayorga Icabalceta, and Deputy Finance Minister Leonel Rodriguez at the Presidential Press and Information Directorate, with foreign and domestic correspondents and moderator Pedro Rioseco—live]

[Excerpts] [passage omitted] [Lacayo] Nicaragua is ready to begin economic reactivation; economic growth; the battle against unemployment; and the major task of producing more, exporting more, planting more, and harvesting more. Just as last year, when skeptics who doubted we could reduce inflation and stop devaluations were proven wrong, we are certain now that those who say there will be no reactivation and we will not move forward will be proven wrong.

With the resources we obtained from the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank; with the backing of Japan, Germany, Taiwan, the United States, Spain, the Netherlands, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Finland, Venezuela, Mexico, Canada, Italy, Austria, Switzerland, and other countries; and with the internal resources we generate when we pay our taxes and our debts to banks, we will promote as of this year economic growth based on a team of two oxen: public investment and loans for production. We are, therefore, going from 1991, which was the year of stabilization, to 1992, which should be the year of economic growth, as we must understand the purpose of stabilization was not to achieve stabilization for its own sake but to lay the foundations to begin growth. That is why the sacrifice is big. The faith and patience of the Nicaraguan people throughout this year regarding the stabilization process was valuable, because now that we are experiencing economic growth we will see some of the benefits of having stabilized our currency. In 1992, we will promote economic growth based, as I said, partly on public investment, where approximately 1.4 billion cordobas will be funneled through the central government, housing construction, infrastructure, ports, highways, road repairs, the Nicaraguan Institute of Energy, the Nicaraguan Waterworks and Sewer Systems Institute [INAA], the Nicaraguan Telecommunications and Postal Services Institute, [name indistinct], and municipalities from all over the country. This figure of 1.4 billion cordobas compares favorably with the approximately 300 billion we managed to invest last year, meaning we are talking about increasing public investment by more than fourfold, something that undoubtedly will have a positive impact on the unemployment rates. In addition, we will promote increased loans for production, consisting of an 85 percent increase in what is called net loans, that is, loans granted but not recovered the same year because they are used for long-term projects. We will give 872 million cordobas in net loans, as opposed to the approximately 472 million cordobas in net loans that were granted last year. This means an increase of 400 million cordobas in net loans; this then entails greater production and greater possibilities of long-term investments in coffee and banana harvests, for instance, and in livestock and cattle breeding—in sum, in activities that can only be carried out if long-term loans are granted.

These public investments, which we have mentioned on other occasions, and greater financing of production, will enable us to generate the jobs the country needs so much. They will enable us to rebuild our infrastructure. They will help us increase production and raise exports. All of us must realize this constitutes the greatest challenge Nicaraguans have ahead of them. There is an absolute need to begin to grow economically. We cannot continue as in 1991 when our economy did not grow—although it did not fall either. What is more, we cannot continue as in the previous seven years when our economy dropped year by year, like an airplane losing altitude and threatening to crash to the ground.

Things, however, are not rosy. We are, in fact, facing a situation that may be even harder than in previous years. We all know and have heard that the prices of our main export, such as cotton and coffee, have plummeted on the world market. Now that the Soviet Union has fallen apart and ceased to exist, we realize the competition for foreign resources has become more critical.

We know well that the low productivity of our work force, a result of our companies' lagging technological

development, has placed our economy at a disadvantage in international markets. I want to be quite frank with you and tell you we find ourselves in a very critical situation that again tests the fiber of Nicaraguans and demands we use all our capacity for sacrifice, all our intelligence, all our patriotic love and revolutionary conviction. I am sure that in these difficult moments, when we have to make up for lost time, Nicaraguans will know how to live up to expectations.

During the most trying moments of World War II, Winston Churchill asked the British people for blood, sweat, and tears. In the same way, we come before you now, not to ask you for more blood, or more tears than have already been spilled here, but for more sweat—the sweat of honest work and the ingenuity needed by our economy to get ahead in an increasingly competitive world. Economic experts estimate we will need a minimum of 10 years of continuous effort to regain our complete economic capacity. We cannot waste time and energy in internal conflicts that divert us from that priority goal. We must dedicate ourselves wholly to the great task of reactivating our economy and building a new society.

Together with public investment and more financing for production, we are launching today a national campaign to reduce production costs and improve production. All Nicaraguans are obliged to work toward this goal, both the government and businessmen and workers, politicians of all parties, elders and youth, men and women of the city and countryside.

The government is intent on removing all the bureaucratic obstacles that hinder production, to facilitate work for productive workers and businessmen. Any official who invents obstacles or imposes unnecessary paperwork and does not facilitate the realization of legitimate economic activity will be removed from his post. This applies to any official who engages in corruption, because both are our enemies.

The task that lies ahead implies a profound social transformation. The real wealth of nations is not measured in terms of the amount of resources they own but in terms of the ingenuity and honest working capacity displayed by its citizens. That is why we are absolutely certain we will be successful. That is why we must all participate. We must be clear that nothing can replace the responsibility and effort of each and every Nicaraguan.

It is time to promote a vast national commitment to favor production, efficiency, and social solidarity. We must lower costs and make our economy more flexible.

We must accept our responsibilities. This is everyone's challenge. We must produce more and work more. We must do so particularly now that so much land has been turned over to the farmers who are demobilized members of the army, demobilized fighters of the resistance, and former employees of the state enterprises. Now that more and more Nicaraguans have their own means of production, we must work from sunrise to sunset. We cannot continue to believe we can increase the levels of production by just working a few hours in the morning in the fields. Let us recall that after World War II, the work days in Germany and Japan were more than eight hours long. Those countries succeeded based on the hard work of their citizens.

We must be more efficient and productive. We cannot continue to have such inefficient channels of distribution in the country. It is not right that if a bunch of 48 onions costs two cordobas and 50 centavos in Esteli, the bunch is sold in Managua for the same amount even though it only has 12 onions. It is impossible for prices to jump four times from Valle de Cebaco to Managua. It cannot be that while the sugar mills sell a quintal of sugar at 92 cordobas—that is at 92 centavos a pound—the consumer has to pay as much as one cordoba and 40 centavos at the corner grocery store.

We have to be more agile, more efficient, and more productive. We must have more social solidarity. As President Violeta Chamorro said in her 25 February message: This is no time for salary increases or for subsidizing producers. It is time to fight unemployment. Even though salaries are low—and they will continue to be low for some time—we must admit Nicaragua is a poor country. We resemble Haiti more than we do Costa Rica, and if everyone wants to work—because we all have a right to work—we will have to work for low salaries. A poor country that wants to provide employment for everyone cannot afford to pay the salaries of a country with more money. Otherwise, one group in the country would have decent salaries, while the other would be sentenced to unemployment for life.

That is why I say this is everyone's challenge. Now is the time for all of us to accept our responsibilities. This is the time for sacrifices; it is the time to work harder and with more love. It is time to stop asking for subsidies and privileges. We must channel all efforts toward the needy and the unemployed who want to work, who have a right to work, and who with their work will make their families happier and Nicaragua a better country. It is time to work the land so that later we will be able to harvest. [Passage omitted]

[Rioseco] Now Central Bank President Silvio de Franco will discuss commercialization.

[De Franco] Good morning. I will refer to some discussions we have had [five-second break in reception] in regard to the interest rate policy we will be promoting during the next agricultural cycle.

First, regarding export activities, it is a well-known fact that export activities take place in an international market where there is strong competition in prices and volume. Therefore, the new policy we will be presenting for the new agricultural cycle for export activities and [word indistinct] will consist of the possibility of transferring the international financial cost, plus a margin representing the handling costs inside the country, to producers engaged in exporting. In other words, this

means that in order to [words indistinct], exporters in Nicaragua will be applied the Libor [London Interbank Offered Rate] interest rate, plus an additional margin resulting from the mechanism of financial mediation. This in turn will substantially reduce the interest rates for agricultural exports and will place them in a much more competitive position.

In regard to agricultural products to be sold domestically, the Central Bank will continue to use the current rediscount rate.

For industries and commerce, depending on the availability of funds according to the Central Bank's overall credit plan, we will periodically offer specific sums through the banking system, which will be assigned through bids. In other words, for industries and commerce, credit will be subject to supply and demand through a bidding system.

As for state-run companies such as Bonazucar, the Nicaraguan Petroleum Enterprise, and INAA, the Central Bank will apply the average bid rate obtained in rediscounts for industries and commerce.

In regard to long-term loans and lines of credit for specific purposes obtained through the IMF, interest rates will be determined by the Central Bank and will be revised annually. [passage omitted]

All these measures—public investment, credits, tax reduction, competitive interest rates for exports, laws to promote exports, the free zone, and foreign investment—are aimed at encouraging and helping good businessmen, so they will invest, prosper, and generate new jobs and more salaries, which are so badly needed. We are also doing this to substantially improve workers' real salaries and purchasing power. We want to see exports, and the country's economy in general, prosper.

Obviously, this is not a time to go to sleep and take it easy; the contrary is true. We are confident that despite the difficulties in regard to international prices, this year the country will experience significant growth. There are three main reasons why we believe this. First, the capacity and ingenuity of Nicaraguans—both businessmen and workers—are recognized internationally. It is difficult to find people with more ingenuity and working capacity in Central America. Second, because of the desire for peace and democracy that Nicaraguans have shown throughout the years in all their struggles; and third, the financial and technical assistance that confirm with words and deeds that this government knows what it is doing. Over and over again we have been told: You are on the right path, and with the help of all Nicaraguans you can be successful in the economic field. [passage omitted]

Cubans Silent About Defections to Costa Rica

PA0103135492 Managua LA PRENSA in Spanish 28 Feb 92 pp 1, 16

[Report by Felix Navarrette]

[Text] The Cuban Embassy in Managua remains silent about the disappearance of 16 Cuban citizens who have fled from Nicaragua into Costa Rica during the last six months.

The two latest cases involve two doctors working in our country. They are Roberto Ramirez and Rafael Gonzalez, 28 and 26, respectively. They went to the neighboring country on 24 February. On 14 February, 16 other Cubans took that same route.

Every case has been the same. According to press reports, some left after requesting political asylum at the Costa Rican Embassy in Managua and others simply headed south, over the mountains and into Costa Rican territory.

LA PRENSA was unable to obtain an official reaction to a news agency report about the two Cuban doctors who fled to Costa Rica on 24 February and were received by Costa Rican authorities at the border in Guanacaste.

Unofficial sources reported that since the wave of defections began, Cuban diplomatic security personnel have started closely controlling and watching the movements of Cuban doctors and teachers who move around the country offering their services.

International observers believe the wave of Cubans requesting asylum or fleeing to Costa Rica may increase this year, due to the economic crisis and the internal tense situation on the Caribbean island.

During a telephone conversation, Helio Fernandez, the press attache at the Cuban Embassy, rejected the report published by ACAN, which was carried by LA PRENSA on 27 February. The Cuban official only said news agencies usually publish false information.

Fernandez promised to release some official information on the case of the Cubans who have fled and requested asylum in Costa Rica, as well as the situation of the Cuban medical brigade, which has been serving in our country for many years.

One of the most outstanding cases was that of a Cuban doctor working at the Lenin Fonseca Hospital in Managua, who requested asylum in the Costa Rican Embassy some months ago and was almost caught by embassy security personnel.

A diplomatic source told LA PRENSA that the doctors and other Cuban technicians and professionals working in this country have been subject to pressure by their embassy in an attempt to prevent them from defecting.

It was also confirmed that other Cubans have decided to live among Nicaraguans and remain in the country as residents, thus avoiding deportation to Cuba. According to unofficial sources, the number of defections has increased since 1990.

Panama

Endara 'Not Entitled To Resolve' Bases Issue

PA0103183292 Panama City EL SIGLO in Spanish 1 Mar 92 p 18

[Report by Andres Davila]

[Text] Nationalist Liberal Republican Movement Legislator Leo Gonzalez pointed out to reporters that President Guillermo Endara is not entitled to resolve the U.S. military bases issue. According to Legislator Gonzalez, the mere fact that President Endara is an elected official does not empower him to decide unilaterally on this issue, he must have the consensus of the people.

Legislator Gonzalez stated the Panama Canal Commission Board of Directors is not prepared to receive the canal in 2000. In addition, the United States could decide to change its five board members, which would not affect the remaining four Panamanian members.

Gonzalez also indicated that Panamanians are not prepared to manage the canal due to what is needed for this endeavor regarding training, political and financial experience, and discipline. It is necessary to establish immediately an office that will be trained to take over all matters concerning the canal in 2000.

In addition, Legislator Gonzales stated that the ad hoc commission established by the executive office, and headed by Joaquin Vallarino, should not spend so much time analyzing alternatives and proposals as it has been doing for so long. Instead, this commission should provide immediate solutions to the Panama Canal issue. The Board of Directors should meet with the United States at the negotiating table and create a parallel commission that will find a solution to this issue.

From another point of view, Legislator Gonzalez said "the international element of the canal must also be discussed, and shipping companies, transnationals, and every sector involved with the Panama Canal Commission and receives some benefit must partake in its discussion."

Finally, Mr. Gonzalez downplayed the importance of U.S. Defense Secretary Richard Cheney's visit. According to the legislator, Mr. Cheney did not specifically come to Panama just to tell President Endara what was going to be done with the military bases. The purpose of Mr. Cheney's visit was entirely different. According to Gonzalez: "We, the National Assembly legislators, do not agree with President Endara when he stated during the interview with Mr.Cheney, that he would point out the need to transfer the U.S. military bases."

Government Considers Canal Privatization Option

PA0103183692 Panama City EL PANAMA AMERICA in Spanish 1 Mar 92 p 1

[Report by Jose Ivan Ramos]

[Text] A document issued by the Ministry of Planning and Economic Policy reports that privatization is one of the options being considered for organizing Panama Canal operations. The document examines various alternatives for administering the interoceanic channel.

The document recalls that the Panama Railroad and the French Channel were organized as private enterprises.

The U.S. Government probably considered this option in the past, but the privatization alternative was barred due to the political nature of the Canal Zone.

The document states that the privatization option has several variants. One would be to privatize canal operations and services, such as lock maintenance and conservation of the ecological basin and services related to Canal operations.

Another alternative, according to the document, would be to grant a concession for the administration of the canal while retaining ownership of the enterprise. The other option considered by the Planning Ministry document calls for the sale of the installations and the enterprise.

The magazine THE ECONOMIST has recommended the privatization of the Panama Canal. The magazine believes it is important to maintain an adequate investment level and doubts that the Panamanian Government is capable of operating the canal.

The document concludes by stating: A private operation, especially by multinational enterprises, would represent a guarantee of efficiency. Otherwise, the canal would become a "state enclave" separate and independent from Panama's society.

Government Downplays Importance of 27 Feb Bomb

PA2902040692 Panama City Circuito RPC Television in Spanish 2300 GMT 28 Feb 92

[Report by David Salayandia]

[Text] Government and Justice Minister Juan Chevalier on 28 February downplayed the importance of the bomb placed on 27 February, reportedly by the 20 December Movement [M-20], on Panama City's Via Argentina.

[Begin Chevalier recording] Placing the bomb there, near a news agency, was done for propaganda purposes. The idea was to get the agency to carry the report all over the world. This was done merely for propaganda purposes. I do not know if this was the M-20; I could care less about who it was. I know they are criminals. That is all that matters to me. [end recording]

The bomb was placed in a toolbox that also contained several communiques calling on authorities not to let U.S. citizens participate in the Carnival festivities.

[Begin Chevalier recording] That is totally and absolutely false. They fabricated that for propaganda purposes. That is why they do these little things. [end recording]

Special police units removed the bomb placed outside the ACAN-EFE news agency. According to National Police Director Oswaldo Fernandez, there is no final report on the device.

[Begin Fernandez recording] The police bomb experts defused the bomb. They are now trying to open it to see what it contains. Afterward, they will issue a report to the appropriate authorities. [end recording]

Fernandez added the National Police will help provide protection during the four days of Carnival.

Endara Opens Assembly Sessions, Calls For Unity

PA0203003592 Panama City Telemetro Television Network in Spanish 2300 GMT 1 Mar 92

[Text] President Guillermo Endara Galimany today asked for unity to strengthen democracy during his speech to inaugurate the ordinary period of sessions of the Legislative Assembly.

[Begin Endara recording] We need to work together to make the results a success. We also have to work united to strengthen democracy. We must remain vigilant. We fought arduously against tyranny to enjoy the freedom that we now have. We must protect that precious treasure against those who do not understand this way of life because their shortsightedness makes them yearn for eras and systems forever outdated and obsolete. Our's is a fledgling democracy, and we are strengthening it. It raises above the ashes of the poverty that a failed dictatorship left to us. Let us all help make it well understood, practiced, and promoted. [end recording]

Government 'Betrayed' People's Hopes

PA2802191092 Panama City LA PRENSA in Spanish 28 Feb 92 p 1

[From the "A's of Today" column]

[Text] Neither the executive nor the legislative branches have dared use the specific mandate granted to them by the Panamanian people in May 1989: To bring democracy to the nation. They have betrayed the hopes the Panamanian people placed in them. It has been demonstrated that their love for liberty—which they cried out to the four winds—was mere rhetoric, used by some to hide their authoritarian tendencies and their dishonesty. The political scenario appears to be dominated by forces motivated by ideas very different from democratic ideals.

The Democratic Revolutionary Party deputies dream of an impossible return of their narcodictatorship, however, no one expected them to act otherwise. They are doomed to disappear. The executive and the legislative branches have not only refused to eliminate the laws inherited from Noriega, but they appear interested in reactivating them. An example of this is the deplorable incident of the new Technical Journalism Board. It was clearly demonstrated that the government's aim was to suppress journalism, but, it is so weak that at the first sign of protest, it backs off. Morally, the government is so weak that it does not hesitate to resort to the ominous servants of the drug-trafficking general. In order for the freedom of expression not be left at the mercy of its enemies, there is only one solution—all of the laws and measures created to restrict, control, or punish its exercise should be repealed once and for all.

Argentina

Menem Comments on Inflation Rate, Cost of Living

PY2802231892 Buenos Aires Radio Nacional Network in Spanish 1500 GMT 28 Feb 92

[Text] President Carlos Menem has stated that nobody should be worried about the price increase and has urged people to remain calm. He noted that Argentines should take care of the stability they have conquered. He denied a continuous increase in the cost of living and pointed out that inflation will reach no more than 10 percent in 1992.

Menem also denied rumors that $3 million were spent to redecorate his office at Government House. He said that the irresponsible individuals who published that report should make a statement or gather all the information to justify what was reported today.

He denied reports of slowness in the state's reorganization process. He said the government has promoted great projects that will be implemented at some time during the decentralization process.

He said: I am among those who are in a hurry, but we must comply with the law because, otherwise, we will go through a de facto situation, which nobody likes.

Menem is holding a lunch meeting with Eduardo Bauza, secretary general of the presidency, Neuque Governor Jorge Sobisch, Santa Cruz Governor Nestor Kirchner, and Chubut Governor Carlos Maestro, all of whom entered the Olivos presidential residence without making any comments.

Government, Political Parties Create Commissions

PY0203033892 Buenos Aires BUENOS AIRES HERALD in English 29 Feb 92 p 11

[Text] (NA-DYN)—The government and the nation's main political parties yesterday formally created nine multilateral commissions in charge of "discussing institutional reforms, agreeing on the process of regional integration within the framework of the Southern Cone Common Market (Mercosur) accord and implementing those policies that will guarantee decent living conditions for all Argentines."

In his speech opening the meeting, Interior Minister Jose Luis Manzano admitted that "many previous such debates failed because the politicians placed their own needs over those of the people." The minister added that "the people are expecting us to commit ourselves to providing solutions to their problems."

Observers commented that the dialogue is a key weapon by which the government plans to get its most important bills through Congress. Opposition parties have repeatedly demanded to be consulted over policy decisions if the Justicialist administration hopes them to endorse its economic and social programme.

Before entering the room where the gathering took place, the Radical delegates, led by Radical National Committee Chairman Mario Losada, distributed a press release pointing out that "this dialogue should be part of a common search for consensus to solve the fundamental problems of the country and not another sporadic method to face a specific crisis."

The Radicals said that "the government should change its current and repeated method of making decisions without considering the opinion of the institutions of the democratic system and of those affected by their measures."

All the Cabinet ministers were present during the ceremony, together with Losada, Justicialist Party interim chairman Roberto Garcia and the leaders of the Christian Democrat Party, Esio Siveira; Democratic Centre Union (UCeDe), Alvaro Alsogaray; Dignity and Independence Movement (MODIN), Aldo Rico; Jujuy Popular Movement, Maria Cristina Guzman; and Corrientes Liberal Party, Ricardo Leconte, among others. There were more than 200 political leaders in the room by the time Manzano read the list of members of each commission.

In an unexpected and surprising move, the government included constitutional reform as one of the topics for the commissions to work on. When the Radical delegates realized it was on the agenda—they had been promised the issue would not be debated at this stage— they asked for an urgent meeting with Manzano only seven hours after the conference. The minister promised the main opposition party that "a constitutional reform will be excluded from the commissions."

Several observers pointed out that although the issue of a constitutional reform was not tackled by any specific commission, it was implicit in the issues to be discussed by the Environment Commission and in the reforms the government proposes to discuss in the institutional reform commission. In order to change the system to elect the president, vice-president and senators for the Federal Capital as the commission could recommend, the sources commented, there must be a constitutional reform.

After the debate, the Christian Democrats made it clear that "we want to help this dialogue to succeed, but we must also protest since the government cannot leave the main principles of its foreign and economic policies out of the debate, because what we are discussing really affects those policies."

In turn, the Intransigent Party expressed its protest over the absence of discussion on the cholera epidemic currently affecting poor areas in five Argentine provinces. "To disregard the cholera problem and discuss presidential re-election and institutional reform instead is to have no concern for the Argentines who are suffering the effects of poverty and the sanitary emergency," said the Intransigent Party in a press release.

For their part, the UCeDe delegates expressed their satisfaction with the talks, "which must be supported by all political forces that share the ideas of the government."

Meanwhile, MODIN head and former leader of two military uprisings Aldo Rico swore he never conspired against democracy and described his rebellions as "moves to defend my institution," Asked whether he believes in the democratic system, Rico said he believed "in the republic and in God; politics is not a matter of faith." Rico said that "this economic model does not work without repression; that is why the police has increased its budget and are preparing the (repression) tools."

Bolivia

President Paz Comments on San Antonio Summit

PY2802154292 La Paz Radio Fides Network in Spanish 1100 GMT 28 Feb 92

[Excerpts] [passage omitted] President Jaime Paz Zamora's agenda included a meeting with Peruvian President Alberto Fujimori last night. The two presidents met for 35 minutes to review the integration plan and the project for a sea outlet through the port of Ilo. President Paz will depart early this morning for Mexico, where he will stay six hours before continuing to La Paz. The president will arrive in La Paz on the morning of 29 February. [passage omitted]

Raul Novillo Alarcon relays the words of the president from San Antonio, Texas:

[Begin recording] [Paz Zamora] President Fujimori and myself had a meeting at the end of the San Antonio meeting to discuss Ilo, this great Bolivian-Peruvian project. We reviewed everything that was done as of 24 January, when we signed the documents for Ilo. I took advantage of the opportunity to ask him to seek funding for the development of Ilo during his trip to Japan in March. We worked out a schedule that includes a visit by the Peruvian foreign minister to La Paz at the beginning of April. The meeting has the purpose of progressing on the large and small details of the Ilo project in view of the new understanding that began on 24 January.

[Novillo Alarcon] President Bush also has mentioned the Ilo project.

[Paz Zamora] Exactly; it was a great surprise. I learned that Ilo had been discussed by the presidents during the luncheon with the other six presidents and representatives. Presidents Bush and Salinas de Gortari proposed a toast to the success of the Ilo project. Later during the news conference, President Bush, on his own initiative, praised the Ilo agreement as a historic achievement and greeted Peru and Bolivia on the project, which he considered a concrete proof of integration in the continent.

[Novillo Alarcon] Mr. President, how do you feel after this meeting?

[Paz Zamora] I am very pleased. I am very pleased with the comments on Ilo, which is very dear to us. I also am pleased with the meeting's results. Bolivian positions and points of views advanced significantly before the eyes of the international community during the meeting.

[Novillo Alarcon] Thank you Mr. President.

[Paz Zamora] I want to share my happiness with all Bolivians, all men and women of my country. [end recording]

Thanks to Raul Novillo Alarcon we received President Jaime Paz's words directly from San Antonio, Texas. You also have heard Pancho Roque, who told us that the president will make an official visit in a few hours to Mexico and will be back in La Paz tomorrow morning.

Cabinet Reshuffle Expected in Next Few Days

PY2802222092 Madrid EFE in Spanish 1755 GMT 28 Feb 92

[Text] La Paz, 28 Feb (EFE)—Sources close to Bolivian President Jaime Paz Zamora confirmed to EFE today that several Bolivian Government ministers will be removed or will change ministries within the next few days. According to these sources, the changes in the government must be announced by Paz Zamora, who is in Mexico on an official visit and will return to Bolivia tomorrow.

The sources reported to EFE that, for the time being, the only confirmed change involves the creation of a new ministry, the Revenue Ministry, which will be headed by former La Paz Mayor Ronald MacLean, a Nationalist Democratic Action (ADN) member.

The conservative ADN party, led by former general and former President Hugo Banzer, and Paz Zamora's social democratic Movement of the Revolutionary Left (MIR) form the Patriotic Accord (AP), which has been governing Bolivia since 1989. The two parties are sharing the ministerial posts and the presidency to which Jaime Paz Zamora gained access in 1989, while Banzer, who governed Bolivia under a dictatorship between 1971 and 1978, will be the presidential candidate for the 1993 elections.

The same sources explained that with the cabinet reshuffle, the Bolivian Government seeks to revitalize its policy in order to face the last part of the congressional session that will conclude in 1993.

The sources stated that Agriculture and Campesino Affairs Minister Mauro Bertero will leave his post, but no decision has been made on who will replace him. They also categorically denied that Interior Minister Carlos Saavedra will be replaced and transferred to the Presidential Ministry. Some media have also speculated on the possibility that Foreign Minister Carlos Iturralde and Information Minister Mario Rueda will also be replaced.

Mario Rueda told local radio stations today that "I will irrevocably and immediately resign" if MIR Secretary General Oscar Eid and Chamber of Deputies President Gaston Encinas, who is also a MIR member, do not deny the criticism that according to a local radio station, they made against his administration in the Information Ministry.

Sanjines 'Unaware' of Reshuffle

PY2902145892 La Paz Television Boliviana Network in Spanish 0200 GMT 29 Feb 92

[Text] Acting President Luis Ossio Sanjines has stated that he is unaware of a decision on a possible cabinet reshuffle. In this regard, he said that it is up to the president of the Republic to make changes.

[Begin Sanjines recording] As you well know, it is up to the president of the Republic to make any change. I am not aware of it. Before leaving the country, the president did not tell me anything about it. On his return, he could make an appropriate decision on the matter in keeping with his constitutional authority. [end recording]

Brazil

Collor Denies Knowledge of Bribery Charges

PY2902151092 Brasilia Radio Nacional da Amazonia Network in Portuguese 1000 GMT 29 Feb 92

[Text] President Fernando Collor denied that the government knew about bribery charges against Antonio Rogerio Magri, former labor and social security minister. The president said the military cabinet did not receive any type of dossier, document, or tape allegedly sent by former INSS [National Social Security Institute] Revenue Director Volnei Avila Collor and said that any consideration of the reports will have to wait for the inquiry to conclude in order to avoid making mistakes.

Former INSS Revenue Director Volnei Avila confirmed the reports against Antonio Rogerio Magri. He said the former minister confessed to him that he received $30,000 to split a company's debts to the INSS into installments. Regarding Magri's remarks that he is undergoing tests to determine his honesty, Avila said only Magri can explain that.

Antonio Magri, in turn, promised to answer all Avila's accusations.

Meanwhile, investigators will hear the testimony of two witnesses mentioned by Avila during his testimony on 27 February and whose names are being kept secret. Former Minister Magri will testify after the Carnival is over. Federal police will end their investigations in 30 days.

Passarinho Acknowledges Charges

PY0203024892 Rio de Janeiro Rede Globo Television in Portuguese 2300 GMT 29 Feb 92

[Text] Justice Minister Jarbas Passarinho said today that he and General Agenor Homem de Carvalho, chief of the Military Household, knew about the corruption charges against former Labor Minister Antonio Rogerio Magri. General de Carvalho said he did not report the corruption charges due to a lack of evidence.

[Begin recording] [Reporter Marcos Losekan] Former Minister Magri is already searching for a lawyer to defend him in the Federal Police's inquest. The former minister's silence is not surprising. He has already said that he will only talk to the Federal Police about the corruption charges, and when he is not called back for interrogation, he will prepare his defense. Lawyer Jose Alckmin, who is already working on the National Health Foundation case involving former National Health Foundation President Isabel Stefano, asked for time to consider becoming Magri's defense lawyer.

[Alckmin] We agreed to talk later, because I do not believe there will be an indictment before 4 March.

[Losekan] Federal Police Inspector Aparecido Feltrin, who is heading the inquest, said he would like to interrogate Magri again before putting all the information together. Most of the information available is already being investigated by the National Institute for Criminal Studies, including the recording in which former Minister Magri reportedly confesses to accepting a bribe during a conversation with the former INSS [National Social Security Institute] revenue director.

Today, for the first time, a high government official admitted that the accusations against Magri had reached Planalto Palace. Justice Minister Jarbas Passarinho revealed that Volnei Avila, the former INSS revenue director, came to Planalto Palace to report the charges to the presidential Military Household, headed by General Angenor Homem de Carvalho, and that the accusations were not filed because Magri was replaced at that time.

[Passarinho] General Carvalho spoke to me about the case, saying that there was no longer any reason to report on it and that Carvalho would tell Avila that he should follow regular channels; namely, talk to the new minister.

[Carvalho] I would have never allowed Volnei Avila to meet with the president if he did not first convince me that there was documented evidence, a recording, or anything else against Magri. I could not possibly have done it without the knowledge of the Justice Ministry, which has a Federal Police department capable of doing that. [end recording]

INSS President Arrested

PY2902144892 Brasilia Radio Nacional da Amazonia Network in Portuguese 1000 GMT 29 Feb 92

[Text] INSS [National Institute of Social Security] President Cesar Gasparin was arrested by Federal Police at Brasilia Airport when boarding a plane to Curitiba. Gasparin was taken to the Federal Police Superintendency while the government tried to obtain a writ of habeas corpus. Cesar Gasparin was arrested with a court order issued by Judge (Celsius Suarger) of the Rio de Janeiro Federal Court. Mato Grosso and Mato Grosso do Sul States also have issued warrants for the arrest of the INSS president. Gasparin will need a writ of habeas corpus for each arrest warrant issued for disobeying court orders. (Suarger) also issued arrest warrants for Dataprev [Social Security Data Processing Enterprise] President Lourenso Martins and the INSS superintendent in Rio de Janeiro. Judges are ordering the arrest of INSS directors because they are disobeying orders to pay the 147 percent adjustment to pensioners.

Chile

Pinochet 'Rejected' Possibility of Sabotage

PY0203011292 Santiago Television Nacional de Chile Network in Spanish 2330 GMT 1 Mar 92

[Text] An explosion in today's predawn hours completely destroyed the ammunition depot of the Azapa Engineers Regiment. According to a communique issued by the Army, the explosion caused damage, but no one was injured.

The city of Arica was rocked by a violent explosion at 0110 this morning. Some eyewitnesses reported that a bright, yellowish smoke mushroom was seen over the southern region of the city where the military sector is located. They added that this mushroom was preceded by bright fires near the Azapa Regiment depot, which is located near the southern entrance of the city.

The depot was an underground storehouse lined with metal. It measured about 6 meters long, 2.5 meters high, and 1.5 meters wide. The amount of ammunition and explosives in the depot has not been established. The depot was located in the El Buitre area, between two hills. It is about 1,000 meters from the Azapa and Dolores regiments. The explosion destroyed most of the windows at both regiments.

In a communique, the Army merely reported that the explosion caused considerable damage, but that no one was injured or killed.

Army Commander Augusto Pinochet, who is on a tour of the Northern Region, visited the site of the explosion this morning. On leaving the Rancagua Regiment at noon today, General Pinochet said the explosion was an accident and an investigation is being carried out. Pinochet categorically rejected the possibility of sabotage.

Tomorrow, Pinochet is scheduled to visit the Dolores Regiment, which is located nearby the site of the explosion. Pinochet will inspect the new artillery materiel acquired by this unit.

'Controversy' Surrounds Honecker's Health

PY2902141092 Santiago Radio Chilena Network in Spanish 1000 GMT 29 Feb 92

[Text] The health situation of Erich Honecker, the former German Democratic Republic's former president, was described as good and equal to his condition when he entered the hospital. According to a medical report from the hospital where he is being treated, tests to determine his true health condition will continue for the next few days.

Regarding rumors that Honecker had to be examined by foreign physicians, the Botkin hospital deputy director and head of the team of doctors treating Honecker said that Russian doctors are quite capable of conducting the tests. The deputy director made clear that no pressures are being applied on the group of physicians, least of all political pressures. The deputy director also said there are no possibilities of a false diagnosis of Honecker's true condition.

The Chilean Foreign Ministry reported that an official medical report will be released on 3 March. A great controversy has developed over Honecker's health because some people say his condition is very serious while others say his treatment is only a pretext to let Honecker travel to Chile to meet with family.

Chilean Ambassador to Germany Carlos Huneeus said during an interview with a German newspaper that Honecker will not be allowed to move to Chile without the German Government's consent. Huneeus said a solution is possible only through an agreement between Germany, Chile, and Russia. Honecker will not be moved to Chile without the consent of the German Government, Huneeus said, adding that the Chilean Government always has maintained that the solution to the problem must include Russia, Germany, and our country.

Roundup of 15-25 Feb Economic Activity Reports

PY2702173292

[Editorial Report] Following are reports on economic activities in Chile from 15 to 25 February. Source information is given in parentheses after each item.

According to figures released by the Central Bank, Chilean trade in 1991 reached $16.501 billion, which represents $9.48 billion in exports and $7.453 billion in imports. The Chilean trade balance in 1991 showed a positive balance of $1.595 billion, an increase of 2.5

percent compared with 1990. Regarding trade with Argentina in 1991, the Chilean deficit was reduced from $389.583 million in 1990 to $296.373 million. In contrast, the trade deficit with Brazil in 1991 increased considerably, going from $76.751 million in 1990 to $249.938 million in 1991. Trade with Mexico increased to $181.684 million in 1991 compared with $158.463 million in 1990. Despite this increase the trade is favorable to Mexico by $94 million. Trade with Bolivia also increased considerably, from $94.772 million in 1990 to $131.97 million in 1991. In this case the trade balance is favorable to Chile by $92.992 million. Trade with the United States in 1991 reached $3.178 billion, a 10 percent increase compared with 1990. The surplus for Chile is $14.364 million. Regarding trade with West Europe, the report shows a surplus for Chile of $1.365 billion. In Asia, Chilean trade shows a surplus with 24 countries: The most important are with Japan, $998 million; Taiwan, $283 million; and South Korea, $94 million. (Santiago EL MERCURIO in Spanish 15 Feb 92 pp A1, A16)

According to a report by the Chilean Copper Commission, Chilean copper exports in 1991 reached 1.7 million metric tons, an increase of 11 percent compared with 1990. The liquid returns for the copper shipments in 1991 reached $3.609 billion, compared with $3.822 billion in 1990. (Santiago EL MERCURIO in Spanish 17 Feb 92 pp B1, B3)

According to the Central Bank, the Chilean economy grew 5.8 percent in 1991. The report states that fishing, transportation, communications, electricity production, and trade activities were the areas that contributed most to this growth. (Santiago Radio Chilena Network in Spanish 1000 GMT 25 Feb 92)

Economy Minister Alejandro Foxley said that the negative February inflation rate will be important in confirming the government's anti-inflation program. He said: "A negative inflation rate in February does not mean that inflation ceased to exist in Chile just as a higher inflation rate in March will not mean that the inflationary process has worsened." Good or bad inflation rates will not mean that the inflationary process is out of control, he added. In the next few years, we gradually will overcome inflation, but we must implement a consistent exchange and salary policy, as well as control any other variable linked to inflation, he asserted. Foxley attributed the negative inflation rate in February to an accentuated decrease in food prices and said that the Central Bank's revaluation of the peso did not affect February's inflation rate. (Santiago Radio Chilena Network in Spanish 1600 GMT 25 Feb 92)

Colombia

Mexico To Host Next Government-Guerrilla Talks

PA2902145592 Santa Fe de Bogota Emisoras Caracol Network in Spanish 1200 GMT 29 Feb 92

[Text] Santa Fe de Bogota—Mexico has given its approval for the Colombian Government and the Guerrilla Coordinating Board to resume their dialogue in Mexican territory.

Horacio Serpa Uribe, the presidential adviser for peace affairs, said a date and exact location for the resumption of the talks with the subversive group's spokesmen have not yet been established. Serpa Uribe also condemned the rebel's continued violence, describing it as a disgrace to the Colombian people.

Talks To Resume 5 Mar

PA0103221092 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 2015 GMT 1 Mar 92

[Excerpts] Santa Fe de Bogota, 1 Mar (NOTIMEX)—The new round of talks between the Colombian guerrillas and government will begin on 5 March in Mexico City, a presidential spokesman reported today in Santa Fe de Bogota.

The government spokesman noted that although the details of the dialogue will be confirmed tomorrow, the guerrilla and government delegates have already agreed with Mexican officials to begin the talks on that day.

The sides agreed to sit at the negotiating table before the elections for mayors, councilmen, and local deputies, which are scheduled for 8 March.

According to details that have been disclosed thus far, the guerrilla delegates will travel to Mexico on 4 March, and the government officials on the morning of 5 March. [passage omitted]

According to preliminary reports, Commanders Alfonso Cano, Ivan Marquez, and Pablo Catatumbo will represent the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia [FARC], even though Timoleon Jimenez, who along with Marquez is considered one of the FARC's top military chiefs, may attend.

Cano, the FARC number-two man, second only to top commander Manuel Marulanda, "Tirofijo," is considered a ranking political leader, and so is Catatumbo.

The FARC is the oldest guerrilla group in Latin America and carries the most weight in the Simon Bolivar National Guerrilla Coordinating Board [CNGSB].

Commanders Francisco Galan and Antonio Garcia, who belong to the political wing of the Army of National Liberation, will represent this group, which is headed by Spanish priest Manuel Perez. Military chief Nicolas Rodriguez Garcia may join the delegation.

The Popular Liberation Army, a minor group within the CNGSB, has not named its delegates to the new round of talks. [passage omitted]

Peace Adviser Denies Date Set

PA0203025092 Santa Fe de Bogota Inravision Television Cadena 1 in Spanish 0130 GMT 2 Mar 92

[Text] Presidential adviser for peace Horacio Serpa Uribe on 1 March denied that peace talks between the government and the guerrillas will resume on 5 March.

He did say, however, that the talks will be held in Mexico. Advisory Commission on Public Order member Gilberto Viera, however, said that the talks will resume on 5 March.

[Begin Vieira recording] The peace adviser proposed that the Simon Bolivar National Guerrilla Coordinating Board [CNGSB] begin the new round of negotiations on 5 March. Everything indicates that the CNGSB has accepted that proposal. [end recording]

Policemen Blamed for Indian Massacre in Caloto

PA2802201092 Santa Fe de Bogota Inravision Television Cadena 1 in Spanish 1730 GMT 28 Feb 92

[Text] The Administrative Department of Security [DAS] has just reported that National Police members participated in the killing of 20 Indians in Caloto, Cauca Department. According to a DAS communique, persons who participated in the massacre and who surrendered to the authorities have said that some of the people who killed the group of Indians might have been policemen. DAS is currently investigating the charges. The accusation generated a great deal of activity in government circles and the National Police command. Pertinent portions of the DAS communique follow:

It has been established that a private group for the administration of justice, financed by several agricultural associations of local farmers, has been operating in the region since approximately 1990. One of the involved commercial associations owns El Nilo hacienda, where the massacre took place. Persons who participated in the killings and who surrendered to the authorities, as well as persons detained during the judicial proceedings, have reported that the killers might include National Police members. That assertion is being rigorously investigated by the authorities.

The authorities have identified the killers and the masterminds, including a man thought to be the leader of the gang that perpetrated the crime. As a result of the investigations, we can affirm that the massacre of the Indians will not go unpunished, as indicated by the arrests conducted and other pieces of evidence, all of which will disclose the criminal structure of the organization responsible for the deed.

Venezuela

Perez Affirms Situation 'Completely Normal'

Rights To Be Restored

PA2902040792 Caracas Venezolana de Television Network in Spanish 0000 GMT 29 Feb 92

[Text] President Carlos Andres Perez affirmed on 28 February that the situation in the country is completely normal. He announced that constitutional rights will be restored in March.

[Begin recording] [Perez] We can still feel the commotion resulting from the violent coup attempt of 4 February. The enemies of democracy attempted to start other activities on 27 February. Fortunately, however, practically nothing happened. Venezuelans realized that the country and the capital city were normal, despite all the announcements they made and fears they tried to instill in us. The capital city was the only place where any attempts were made. These attempts, made by those who do not want democracy to continue guiding Venezuela's future, failed.

[Unidentified reporter] [Question indistinct]

[Perez] There is no doubt that there were some incidents by certain groups. But allow me to tell you in all sincerity that they were completely unsuccessful.

[Second unidentified reporter] When will constitutional rights be restored?

[Perez] Well, that will happen soon. The suspensions will not last much longer. We must do this, as we are in the final process of investigating the 4 February events. All Venezuelans may rest assured that constitutional rights will be fully restored in March. [end recording]

Meets With COPEI Leader

PA2902042792 Caracas Venezolana de Television Network in Spanish 0000 GMT 29 Feb 92

[Report by Zaida Pereira]

[Text] Given the situation that has developed in some national institutions and the request for major constitutional amendments, Eduardo Fernandez, Social Christian Party [COPEI] secretary general, met on 28 February with President Carlos Andres Perez to formally ask him to install a national constituent assembly.

Eduardo Fernandez made this statement after a COPEI Operations Committee meeting. The party committee discussed the confirmation of Chamber of Deputies President Luis Enrique Oberto because an agreement had been reached with the Democratic Action party whereby the ruling party would confirm current Congress President Pedro Paris Montesinos. That way, the institutional pact would be respected. Regarding the proposal to Perez to call a referendum, Eduardo Fernandez said the people expect a new political period to emerge. He noted that calling a referendum to install a national constituent assembly would be a positive response.

[Begin Fernandez recording] We are going to push for a new constitution. We will call a constituent assembly. Let us make this possible now, not wait for the 1992 or 1993 elections. Let us summon the people so that through their ballots they can stimulate, expedite, move forward, the process of change the country demands. [end recording]

The creation of the constituent assembly would be voted on in March, during the ordinary congressional sessions. If approved, it may be incorporated into the Constitution this year. Although he supports a national referendum, Congress President Paris Montesinos said he has reservations on the request to call a national constituent assembly. Paris Montesinos said it was not necessary to install a constituent assembly to amend the Constitution, since a bicameral commission, chaired by Senator for Life Rafael Caldera, is reviewing the Constitution in search of a third amendment. The proposal, which has been on the front burner for some time, seeks to change the country's current political situation, mainly to change the government, he added. That is not the fastest method, since that can be achieved by waiting for the terms established in the Constitution to let the people choose their leader.

[Begin Paris recording] The excuse is that several government institutions need reform. We are working on that. We are working on state reforms. There have been, of course, delays in the institutional procedures to review matters that are barely in the study phase. [end recording]

Paris Montesinos added the Commission to Amend the Constitution establishes reforms of the judicial branch, one of the most talked about problems in recent days. The creation of a top level justice committee has been proposed, tasked with choosing the persons who would sit on the high court. So it is proven that the current constitution revision does establish profound changes in the state branches. The Congress president said the proposals for a referendum and the resignation of the lawmakers are generated by people with biased, not lofty, interests. For that reason, one must be very careful.

Favors Constituent Assembly

PA2902191292 Paris AFP in Spanish 1711 GMT 29 Feb 92

[Text] Caracas, 29 Feb (AFP)—As opposition forces have suggested, President Carlos Andres Perez has spoken in favor of summoning a National Constitional Assembly to reform the current Constitution to seek a solution to the Venezuelan institutional and government crisis.

Perez' acceptance to include the referendum option in the Constitution and summon a constituent assembly was front page news in the main Caracas newspapers on 29 February, along with a request from former Christian Democrat President Rafael Caldera (1969-1074) for the president to resign. Caldera is the founder of the Social Christian Party, COPEI.

Perez feels the referendum should be broadened so the country can solve many problems it finds difficult to resolve now.

"The Venezuelan Constitution was the first one to last more than 10 years. We have had the same Constitution for 34 years, which was drafted under dictatorial influence. It is time for us to review it," Perez said.

He added that the reforms could include a system to summon a constituent assembly and to deny that possibility would mean being inflexible, which leads nowhere.

Ruling Democratic Action party leaders disagree with the president and said that to call for a referendum or a constituent assembly would violate the Constitution.

Regarding the economic reforms several sectors have requested, Perez said that it is impossible for all Venezuelans to agree on how to govern, and no institution can say everything it does is perfect; therefore, one has to accept that improvements and changes are always possible.

Perez gave assurances that in March his government will reinstate all the guarantees that were suspended following the 4 February coup attempt.

On 28 February, COPEI Secretary General Eduardo Fernandez proposed to Perez the possibility of summoning a referendum to reform the Constitution and elect a constituent assembly, prior to the December 1993 elections, "because the people should be summoned now so they can encourage, accelerate, and start the change process that most people demand."

According to the 1961 Constitution, there are two ways to modify the Constitution: Amendments or reforms. Reforms mean deeper changes because it entails summoning a popular referendum so citizens can decide if they want constitutional reforms.

Afterward, the constituent assembly, which has among its powers the right to dismiss the Supreme Court of Justice, Congress, and even the president, would then draft the new constitution.

Since the coup attempt, the left wing CAUSA RADICAL newspaper has also requested a referendum to decide on revoking Perez' mandate and moving elections forward.

Rejects Resignation Demands

PA0203011392 Caracas Venezolana de Television Network in Spanish 0106 GMT 1 Mar 92

[Address to the nation by President Carlos Andres Perez at the Miraflores Palace in Caracas—live or recorded]

[Text] People of Venezuela, I feel compelled to distract my fellow countrymen at the beginning of their Carnival holidays for the sake of the nation's interests. In the early morning hours of 4 February we countered a grave attempt against democracy and we defeated it. As head of state I fulfilled my duty.

Today's news media carried the demand that I resign my post as president of the republic. The people elected me for a constitutional period that ends on 2 February 1994. I will carry out my constitutional duty by performing my duties as president throughout this period. There is no reason that this request for resigation would accomplish

what was not achieved during the hours before dawn on 4 February, when there was an attempt to murder or arrest me to establish a dictatorship in our fatherland.

My presence in the government is not the product of whim or arrogance. I am convinced that in this crisis we are experiencing, the presence of the president in his post is crucial to finding a democratic solution. I am open to all possibilities for resolving this crisis in accordance with our Constitution and sane judgment.

I have talked with all sectors of society. I have invited other parties to join the executive cabinet, and ultimately I have decided to name a consultative council, which has been well received by all of the country's sectors. We have already held our first meeting. We are now working so that this council, in meetings with the president and the ministers, can produce the recommendations and agreements that may be appropriate to face the crisis we are now experiencing.

The resignation of the president would amount to attempting to resolve through other means what was not achieved by force during the hours before dawn on 4 February. I do not want to extend my remarks. I just want to say most emphatically that the doors of the Miraflores Palace are open to all of the country's sectors. I will continue the talks, seeking formulas to foster a climate of tranquillity that is indispensable for the country in continuing to advance toward recovering full normalcy.

I will continue to talk with all sectors of the country that may wish to hold talks with me or I may summon for that purpose. I will not, however, cease in any way to fulfill my constitutional duties, as I did not during the hours before dawn on 4 February.

Oil Industry Expert Named New Energy Minister

PA0103171792 Hamburg DPA in Spanish
1547 GMT 1 Mar 92

[Text] Caracas, 1 Mar (DPA)—It was officially announced in Caracas on 1 March that Alirio Parra, an oil industry expert involved in the local energy industry, has been appointed energy and mines minister of Venezuela, replacing Celestino Armas, who is now in charge of the Secretariat of the Presidency.

Parra was deputy chairman of the Energy General Research Center headquartered in London and chaired by former OPEC Secretary General Shaykh Ahmad Yamani. Parra has represented his country at OPEC and has been director of Venezuelan Petroleum Incorporated and the Oil Policy office.

His appointment is part of a major cabinet change following the foiled coup of 4 February. Deputy Minister Rafael Guevara has been acting as head of the strategic Energy and Mines Ministry.

Parra, who will be sworn in this week, replaces Celestino Armas, a close political ally of President Carlos Andres Perez. Armas, who is unfamiliar with the oil industry, had frequent confrontations with the directors of Venezuelan Petroleum Incorporated on the most important Venezuelan oil policy issues.

Ministry Confirms Weapons, Ammunition Theft

PA0203003492 Paris AFP in Spanish
2322 GMT 1 Mar 92

[Text] Caracas, 1 Mar (AFP)—The Defense Ministry confirmed on the afternoon of 1 March that a soldier and four other people have stolen weapons and ammunition from Fort Tiuna, in southeast Caracas.

According to the official report, "at approximately 0100 on 1 March, Lieutenant Raul Alvarez Bracamonte presented himself at the headquarters of the Miranda Battalion, in Fort Tiuna, where he was stationed, and together with four individuals subdued the guard personnel and took 40 weapons, including light automatic rifles and submachineguns, as well as 7.62-mm and 9-mm ammunition."

The communique added that since then, the Directorate of Military Intelligence (DIM) and other state security organizations have taken steps to locate those responsible for this incident.

According to unconfirmed newspaper reports, the armed group also stole machine guns and grenades.